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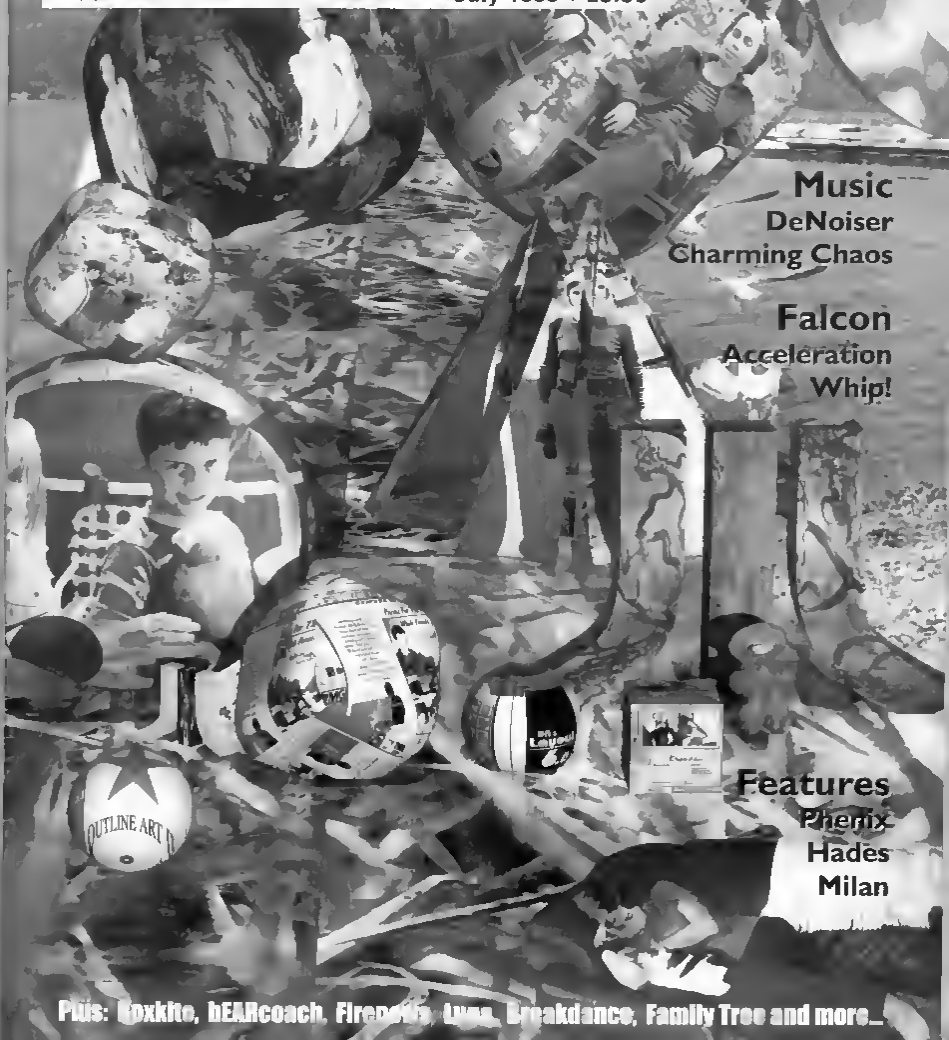
ATARI COMPUTING

Issue 14 July 1999 • £3.50



Music
DeNoiser
Charming Chaos

Falcon
Acceleration
Whip!

Features
Phenix
Hades
Milan

Plus: Boxkite, bEARcoach, Firepower, Lynx, Breakdance, Family Tree and more...

"Summer Sale"

Phone now for special prices!

Veloce+

Bring your STe up-to-date with Veloce+ from T.U.S. Developments, processor upgrade to 68020 32 Bit at 16Mhz, additional 2 or 4Mb FastRAM and TOS 2.06 all on board. Load NVDI into 32 Bit FastRAM for lightning screen updates, along with the program disk to leave 4Mb STe Ram free for data.

Compatible with most high end STe software packages such as CUBASE v3 and Score, Notator Logic, Papyrus, Calamus, Timeworks and many many more. Please call or visit our website for further information. Available for DIY installation (soldering required) with full manuals or fitted by THE UPGRADE SHOP.

- ✔ 68020 Processor running at 16Mhz
- ✔ 0, 2 or 4Mb FastRAM
- ✔ TOS 2.06 on board
- ✔ FastRAM and TOS full 32 Bit zero wait state
- ✔ Switchable between existing 68000 and 68020 for maximum compatibility
- ✔ Compatible with IDEal Hard Drive Interface
- ✔ Fits inside a standard STe case

Veloce+	(0Mb FastRAM)	£ 99.00
Veloce+2	(2Mb FastRAM)	£149.00
Veloce+4	(4Mb FastRAM)	£189.00

IDEal

The IDEal hard drive system from T.U.S. Developments uses the latest 2.5" IDE hard drives found in computers such as the Falcon and PC Notebooks.

The entire hard drive fits inside the standard STe case and is extremely quiet in operation. All kits are complete with fitting instructions, cables and software.

IDEal Interface only	£ 59.00
IDEal Interface and 170Mb Drive	£109.00
IDEal Interface and 340Mb Drive	£139.00

Other sizes available - please call

T.U.S. Developments
01625 503448
http://www.tusdev.demon.co.uk
Email: dave@tusdev.demon.co.uk

- ✔ Fully Atari compatible design
- ✔ *New* 2 drive systems - please call
- ✔ Works alongside SCSI-based systems
- ✔ Complete with formatting/partitioning software
- ✔ Very quiet in operation

Veloce+ & IDEal Drives

Veloce+2 c/w IDEal 170	£249.00	Veloce+4 c/w IDEal 170	£289.00
Veloce+2 c/w IDEal 340	£279.00	Veloce+4 c/w IDEal 340	£319.00

Other options available

CHEETAH EXTERNAL HARD DRIVES

The Cheetah external hard drive from T U S Developments brings affordability and style to any Atari system

- Complete with Host Adaptor and cable
- Formatting and partitioning software included
- Small case dimensions
- Built in power supply and cooling fan
- Dual SCSI external connectors for daisy-chaining extra devices
- ID selector

A fully featured system that can be used on more than Atari computers All systems are supplied pre formatted and partitioned ready for immediate use.

160Mb	**£149 00**
200Mb	**£179 00**
540Mb	**£222 00**

HI RESOLUTION 14" MONO MONITORS

Improve your clarity with T U S s 14" mono monitor for the Atari ST series High resolution screen ideal for Cubase Notator and many other programs All monitors include appropriate connecting leads and a tilt and swivel stand

Without sound	**£94 00**
With sound (stereo on Ste)	**£109 00**

ATARI MEMORY

STe/Mega STe	
1/2 meg	**£10 00**
2 meg	**£25 00**
4 meg	**£49 00**
STFM Marpet	
1/2 meg	**£36 00**
2 meg	**£55 00**
4 meg	**£75 00**

All kits are supplied with comprehensive fitting instructions testing software and a free disk of useful PD/Shareware utilities

TOS 2.06

- Enhanced operating system from Atari
- Improved desktop
- Full keyboard control of windows
- Place programs on desktop for easy launching
- Assign function keys to launch programs
- Switchers give access to old TOS system for complete compatibility
- All kits supplied with full fitting instructions and TOS manual

STe Version 2 kit (TOS 1 62/2 06 supplied) Simple solderless installation	**£47 99**
STF/STFM fitted free	**£54 99**

HIGH DENSITY DRIVES

- Easy exchange of data with other platforms
- Your ST reads and writes high density (1 44Mb) discs
- Fully automatic switching controlled by type of disk placed in the drive
- Complete with software drivers and high density formatting software

High Density Module	**£25 00**
High Density Module and 2Mb disc drive	**£49 00**

Note TOS 1 4 or above required for high density support

TOS 2.06 & HIGH DENSITY DRIVE PACKAGE

STe TOS 2 06 with HD Drive & Controller	**£95 00**
STFM TOS 2 06 with HD Drive & Controller	**£101 00**

MODEMS

Do you want to send emails browse the world wide web and join in the comms revolution with your Atari? Using one of our modems and suitable software you can do just that

T U S 33,600 Voice, Data, Fax Modem	**£59 00**
T U S 57,600 Voice, Data, Fax Modem	**£74 00**

BABT approved with CE markings complete with cables and software for Bulletin Board access

SERIAL PORT UPGRADE

Use a fast modem with any ST machine by installing a T U S 57 600 Baud serial port upgrade kit

DIY fitting with full instructions	**£22 00**
If supplied with any of above modems	**£15 00**

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Fully trained engineers for a reliable repair All jobs quoted for individually (no fixed prices) 48 hour turnaround on most machines Long 4 months warranty as standard Courier collection and return available for **£14 00**

We can fit any advertised products to your machine for a one off fitting charge of **£15 00** This means that if you require an upgrade and a high density drive fitted then the charge is only **£15 00**

Please telephone for an appointment before bringing your machine or call if courier collection is required Please ensure all parcels collected are adequately packaged

Replacement internal drive kit
For any ST with internal drive High quality mechanism with stand offs for old ST's if required 1Mb or 2Mb drive supplied **£29 99**

Power Supplies
Repaired and supplied (call for availability)

✪ *Summer Sale - special prices* ✪

Call for details

The Upgrade Shop

37 Crossall Street, Macclesfield, Cheshire, SK11 6QF
Telephone 01625 503448
Monday - Friday 9:00AM - 6:00PM Saturday 9:00AM - 12:30PM
ACCESS DELTA MASTERCARD VISA SWITCH

Delivery Charges
Small items under £60 00 please add £3 00 P&P
Large items and orders over £60 00 please add £7 00 courier charge
Courier Pickup for upgrades and repairs 7 00

All prices include VAT@17 5% but exclude delivery (unless [illegible] above Orders can be placed by telephone quoting credit card details or by Mail Order please make cheques and postal orders payable to The Upgrade Shop
1 year warranty on all products (unless otherwise stated) 4 months [illegible] repairs Prices subject to change without notice E&OE

ATARI COMPUTING

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We will do our best to help you through the pages of the magazine but cannot enter into personal correspondence.
It would be very helpful if editorial, subscription and general enquiries are sent on separate sheets of paper or separate ASCII format files on disk.

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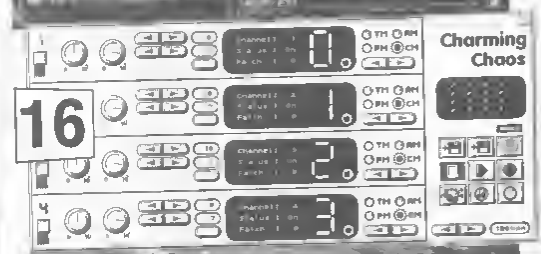

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Charming Chaos

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CENTurbo II

ABOUT THE COVER

Atari Dreams

All but the image on the sofa and the picture of the two children were taken with my Olympus camera and downloaded into the Atari. The image of the kids and my sweetie pie on sofa were scanned into the Atari using an Epson Expression scanner. In Strata Studio Pro the shapes were rendered with embedded photographs. The screen shots were taken using Imagecopy and ported to the Mac. After rendering, the image was ported back to the Atari. The background image was interpolated up with Photoline. The images were then loaded into Das Repro, collaged and anti-aliased.

Dave Barkin
Email: dave@ataricomputing.com

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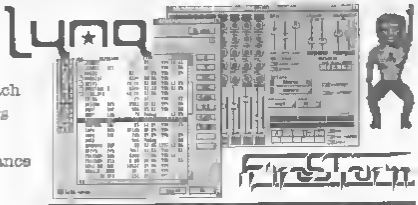

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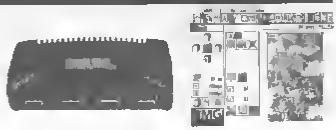


The fat lady sings

Sadly [illegible] closure [illegible] end [illegible] sustain [illegible] product [illegible] attracting [illegible] platforms faster than [illegible] replace them. We [illegible] there are not enough like-minded Atari enthusiasts prepared to buy Atari Computing. Compounding the problem of falling sales changes in the family circumstances of Atari Computing staff have recently made putting together each issue and running the office increasingly difficult.

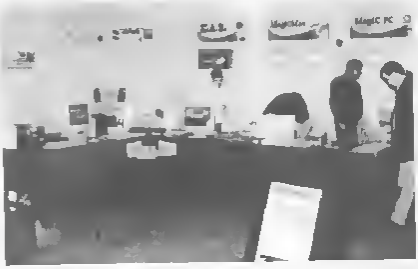
We launched Atari Computing because we believed there was still life in the Atari marketplace and after three years we have the satisfaction of being proved right. We're proud of our achievements but all good things come to an end and we plan to retire at the top. Although AC#16 will be the end for Atari Computing the resources we use to put each issue together are available on line for everyone to take advantage of. Internet service providers are falling over themselves to offer free internet access so act now and get on-line and actively participate in the worldwide Atari scene. There are thousands of Atari webpages and places to download software and you'll find the Atari newsgroups a rich source of information. Best of all they'll be around for years to come so what are you waiting for?

Don't forget we'll still be working hard producing Atari Computing until the end of the year and produce that Millenium issue. The Millenium issue will be launched at ACC '99 as part of our Millenium Party celebrations so make a note in your diaries now & join us and collect your copy in person!

Joe Connor

News...

ACC 99 millennium Party at AMS 99



The System Solutions stand at the Spring AMS 99

Is that El we see?

Make a note in your diaries to attend ACC 99 the last UK Atari event this side of the millennium on Saturday 13th November 1999 at Bingley Hall Stafford from 10am to 4pm We'll be launching our Atari Computing January 2000 millennium issue which we plan to have ready for subscribers to collect everyone else will just have to wait for their copy in the post after we've recovered sometime in January! We'll be sending out discount entry tickets to UK subscribers next issue

To book a stand or for more information

Tel 01473 212113 Fax 01473 212114

http //www sharward co uk

Email rgamble@cix co uk

Abingdon Synthesis Projects

ASP is dedicated to the survival of the Atari computers as the only sensible MIDI platform for the musician on a budget and can supply

- Hard-drives 120Mb SCSI from £12
- CD-ROMs fix SCSI for £30 including drivers and shareware CD-ROM
- Second user Atari software and hardware including floppy drives keyboards and memory SIMMs
- 4x1Mb SIMMs suitable for STe £10

Abingdon Synthesis Projects 40 Evelyn Road Abingdon, OXON OX14 1JR

Tel 01235 534152 after 6pm

Email chrisc@zetnet co uk

CIX tops poll!

Internet Magazine in the UK tests and rates UK ISPs and the results are published each month in their publication The tests cover a range of performance criteria CIX the home of Atari Computing topped the poll in April s issue first out of 117

Atari Computing is a CIX reseller and you can sign up on-line using most credit cards Using a modem and terminal program dial 0181 296 1255 follow the on screen instructions and remember to enter our CIX reseller code **crs0016** when prompted In AC#6 p32/33 we covered CIX in detail including our SwiftCIX offer which includes a disk and manual containing everything Ataristas need to get online for just £4 99 If you d like to order this or a copy of AC#6 please complete the Reader Offers form on page 10 http //www cix co uk

Titan to the Core

Titan Designs has been renamed Core Design although the people and products remain unchanged Eclipse is now in production and anyone who would like one is advised to reserve one now to avoid disappointment. The expected retail price is around £199 00

Distributors are as follows

Germany Austria Switzerland

AG Computertechnik

Email AG_Comtech@t online de

Tel +49 (8331) 86373

France/Belgium

ACS Production

Email alainc@imaginet fr

USA/Canada TBA

All other countries will be supplied directly by Core Design

Core Design 6 Witherford Way Selly Oak Birmingham B29 4AX U K

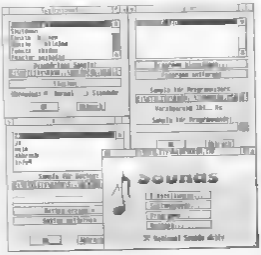
Tel +44 (0)121 693 6669

Fax +44 (0)121 414 1630

Email sales@titan bss co uk

http //titan bss co uk

Rational Sounds



Rational Sounds programmed by Heiko Achilles and Nils Schneider (Heinsoft) is a stylish GEM utility which brings your Atari machine (STe sound hardware or better including compatibles and emulators) to life Using Rational Sounds you can add sounds to most system events including

- Window open/close/full size un/shading, un/iconify
- System "ping" and keyclick
- Buttons OK Cancel, and others
- Program start/end
- Clock on the hour and every quarter hour
- Menus BubbleGEM bubbles file selector alert/dialog boxes bombs
- System start/shutdown

Rational sounds comes complete with an example soundscape which is installed using the GEM Setup utility which copies all the component parts to the correct locations and configures your system GEMjing is used to play the sounds ST Guide GEMScript and BubbleGEM support are all included Rational Sounds costs DM 59 (around £22) and a demo version can be downloaded from the authors webpages at

Woller Systems Grunewaldstr 9, 10823 Berlin-Schöneberg Germany

Tel +49 (0)30/21750286

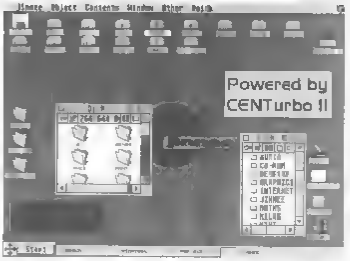
Fax +49 (0)30/21750288

http //www woller com

http //www talknet de/~hornsk/

Rational Sounds v2 0 is currently in beta offering many new features including sounds for individual keys sounds assigned according to window title an alarm window alerts and CPX

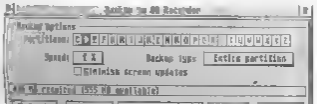
System Solutions



The long-awaited English version of Jinnee popped onto the scene at SAMS 99. This replacement desktop combines some of the best features from Windows, Mac OS and X Windows with a bundle of new concepts, offering Atari users a powerful yet elegant MagiC working environment.

MagiC Mac has currently been updated with a version number jump to v6 – to harmonise with the Atari version numbers. Upgrades from v1 cost £49.95, from v2 are £19.95. Return your original disks to the System Solutions mail order centre.

At the Neuss Atari show SoundPool GmbH launched the Milan edition of CDRecorder, which is now available as separate programs for audio and data (previously the two together were sold as a high end solution for all CD creation tasks). SoundPool's UK distributor is System Solutions.



Anodyne Software's CDWriter Plus package, previewed last issue, was another important product release at the UK show. This package makes it quick and easy to back-up your hard disk to inexpensive and durable CD-R(W) media. As mentioned in the preview, this requires ExtenDOS Gold 3.1 to work and there's currently a special bundle deal consisting of CDWriter Plus and ExtenDOS Gold 3.1, available for £89.95.

Existing CDWriter owners can upgrade to CDWriter Plus by returning your original package with £19.95 to the System Solutions mail order centre.

Hades workstations just get even meaner with the introduction of a new graphics card. The ATI Rage Pro Turbo 3D chip set features a powerful object processor and 8Mb VRAM. Furthermore, its firmware has been re-programmed such that the card will always start up in a standard Atari screen mode (ST high) if no software driver is installed. A specific ATI driver is supplied, which needs to work in conjunction with NVDI 5 to access the new resolutions. Now you can run your Hades in anything from 640x480 to an eye-popping 1600x1200 pixels and 2 right up to 16 777 216 colours (even in the highest resolution) at 76Hz refresh.

The card's significantly improved performance over the Tseng Labs ET4000/6000 series and integrated hardware 3D functionality should help establish it as the new standard for Hades graphics professionals.

Price: £189.00+VAT (also requires NVDI 5). Email: hades@system-solutions.co.uk. Tel: 0181 693 3355.

The System Solutions mail order address and changed of operational focus. The former Windsor branch is now fully dedicated to mail order only (no personal callers).

System Solutions (Mail Order), PO Box 3768, Bracknell, Berkshire, RG42 7YL.
Tel: +44 (0)1344 890008
Fax: +44 (0)1344 890003. 10am – 6pm Monday to Friday.

All engineering work is now handled at the London HQ's improved workshop facility upholding the Atari seal of approval. More details and advice is available on-line at http://www.system-solutions.co.uk/

Useful contacts
soundpool@system-solutions.co.uk
anodyne@system-solutions.co.uk
Mail Order Tel: +44 (0)1753 832212
Fax: +44 (0)1753 830344

MGC '99

MagiC programming competition

MagiC Online, run by Bengy Collins, in conjunction with The X are holding this MagiC programming competition. The judges will be the Atari community. All entries will be available for download on December 5th 1999. At this time, voting sheets will be made available to the general public. The winner(s) will be notified on Christmas Day, December 25th 1999. This means that all nominations must be received by December 24 1999. The goal is to create the best possible conversion of a classic game. Examples would be conversions of Asteroids, Pacman, Frogger. A list of many possible conversions can be viewed on the official MGC 99 homepage. The catch, however, that the game must be created to run perfectly under MagiC in a GEM window.

The 1st, 2nd and 3rd prizes are 250$, 150$ and 100$ US respectively. Atari Computing are also sponsoring the event by offering every entrant a free copy of our Millenium Issue and renegade CD. Further sponsorship could possibly add more prizes to this list.

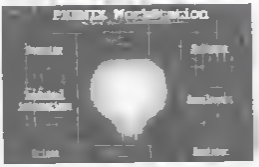
The deadline for entries (which just requires an email) is September 15th 1999. The competition closes on December 5th 1999, at which time all entries must be received. The deadline for votes is December 24th 1999. Check out the official English and German Pages at:

English
http://bengy.atari.org/contest.htm
German
http://bengy.atari.org/contestd.htm
For more information contact:
Jan Dalsdrup
Email: thex@atari.org
http://xonline.atari.org
Bengy Collins
Email: collins@bulli.com
http://bengy.atari.org

Centek merges with Class 4

Centek's focus on the Phenix workstation project was recently strengthened by merging with Class 4, one of its main CENTurbo II distributors in Europe. The move aims to supply important resources to the designers as well as fund initial manufacturing, while commercial operations are handled by a dedicated team on the same premises.

Class 4 continues to do business in the Atari market using the Centek brand name on hardware and software products. Its new 1700m² office will also act as a Phenix showroom, service and support centre when the machine is ready.



New address CLASS 4 (CENTEK) 42 rue Delegorgue F-62970, COURCELLES LES LENS France
Tel +33 3 2 1 409 400
Fax +33 3 2 1 746 449
http //www centek fr
http //www sitecenseil com/centek/english/
Email vxp@imaginet fr

The Vintage Computer Festival 3 0

October 2nd and 3rd at the Santa Clara Convention Center in California US sees the third Vintage Computer Festival sponsored by Parallax Inc and Dr Dobb s Journal Attractions this this year include

- More great speakers and exhibits
- More vendors with cool stuff to sell
- More fun games and contests including the Nerd Trivia Challenge
- Tour The Computer Museum History Center
- Flea market
- Some free stuff and much more!

Of particular interest to Atarians will be speaker Curt Vendel the founder of the Atari Historical Society (check out his website at http //www atari history com) who has amassed an amazing collection of Atari artefacts and company history in cluding some one of a-kind Atari prototypes For more information check out http //www vintage org

Cadenza Software Sale

Prices valid until August 1999 HiSoft BASIC v2 10 (brand new copies) £30 plus post and packing of £7 UK, £15 ROW HiSoft BASIC v2 10 plus ENCHANT only £40 plus post and packing of £7 UK £15 ROW

Web Wizard v3 10 s due for release soon featuring multiple language support HTML tutorial series and various other small upgrades Web Wizard v3 10 will cost £15 for new users with FREE upgrades for v3 03 so if you buy now you ll be entitled to the free upgrade Web Wizard v4 (WYSIWYG) now in progress

Matthew Bacon/Cadenza Software
49 Douglas Road Surbiton Surrey KT6 7RZ UK
Email cadenza@cyberstrider org
cadenza@atari org
http //www cadenza cyberstrider org
http //www cadenza atari org

Circle BBS

With so many Atari BBS s closing (including the Tavern Meon Valley and others) t s nice to report a new one The sysop is friendly and has recently released his own ST game The board s main interest is sound MODules with a varied collection including some I ve never heard before

Circle is a ring-back board which works like this

- Dial 01670 812192 let the phone ring once then hang up
- Wait 15-20 seconds while the BBS is loaded
- Call 01670 812192 again and you should be connected

Don t just call or you re likely to hear the sysop GOR say "Hello" through your modem speaker!

Wensuite III

OXO Systems have recently released Wensuite III along with a new product called Expresso Wensuite now supports frames animated graphics and OXO Systems claim is very stable the email and newsgroup modules work together perfectly and is the fastest Atari browser

Expresso is a WYSIWYG HTML page designer which supports multiple frames animated and transparent GIFs

Updates for existing Wensuite users are free. For new users Wensuite on floppy disk costs 80FF (around £8) or on CD costs 130FF (around £13)

Expresso for existing Wensuite users costs 300FF (around £30) or for new users 490FF (around £49) Expresso and Wensuite III together cost 590FF (around £59)

Also according to Oxo Systems HTML 4 0 and JavaScript support feature in forthcoming Wensuite and Expresso updates
http //www oxo ch
http //www imaginet.fr/~oxo/

Calamus News

MGI the company which took over Calamus from DMC decided in December 1998 to cancel all development and distribution of MGI Calamus Digital Publisher v2 (CP2) for Windows However the Atari version of Calamus SL has continued to be developed and expanded in Germany and they are proposing Windows users "crossgrade" to Calamus SL99 by running an Atari emulator

MGI Calamus SL99 works with all relevant TOS systems (Atari Medusa Hades Milan) on Apple computers (G3 PPC or Mac with MagiCMac) and with Windows95/98/NT

SL99 features

- Type 1 Fontloader in addition to CFN fonts you can finally use Type 1 PostScript fonts directly in Calamus Both PC (suffix PFB) and Macintosh format are supported TrueType fonts are not currently supported)
- SL99 documents can now be saved with the fonts embedded so no more wasted time searching for fonts when reloading documents!
- Define double clicks in document windows For example double clicking in a text frame could call the Eddie text editor)
- When moving text ruler tabs a vertical help line is displayed
- The module panels are placed in real windows
- The Create Frame mode is no longer the default so you do not have to click the right mouse button for mode changes that often as before
- Preview available for fonts and some image formats with document and module preview still under development.
- Images can be decompressed when Fixing Document
- Help Text color can now be defined
- Calamus SL no longer has a general print resolution limit.

The Additional modules/drivers in the SL99 package are. Text Editor EDDIE light Control Curve Editor FrankLIN light Histogram module GDPS module Gridplay module HKS Palette module Toolbox PLUS preview modules invers Barcode Generator module Imposition module light (Output limited to 720 dpi) Raster CacheGeneretor very enhanced features and handling Ping module (optional bell signal after printing) GIF 89a, Megapaint BLD JPEG Photoshop EPS and Kodak PhotoCD import drivers General Two User Licence (for 1 SL Serial Number in a single location)

All modules and drivers which are a part of the Calamus SL standard package are now shipped with the current version All additional modules and drivers from MGI (DMC) Adequate Systems FRS and invers registered in Germany for your Calamus version will be added to actual versions if necessary Your old CFN fonts can still be used Anyone owning additional modules for the Windows version of Calamus will be offered SL equivalents where possible.

invers Software Vertrieb Ulf Dunkel Alter Postweg 6 D 41624 Loeningen Germany
Tel (05432) 9 20 73
Fax (05432) 9 20 74
Email Sales sales@calamus net
Email Support support@calamus net

PD/Shareware News on page 40

ATARI COMPUTING Offers...

Essential accessories for you and your machine - subject to availability. Stocks for some offers are LOW, hesitate and you could miss out!

BACK ISSUES

Atari Computing Issues 1, 2, 3 and 8 are now sold out but we do have a small stock of other back issues. Get them while we've still got them! £3.00 each including UK delivery.

MOUSE MATS

Atari Power User and Friend of the Beast present all of these top quality mouse mats. These slimline mouse mats are 1mm thick and feature a smooth hard surface and non slip base. They cost just £4.00 including UK delivery.

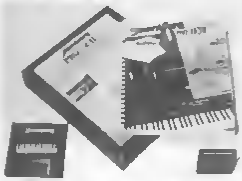
READER DISKS

Individual Reader Disks are available separately from the magazine. Each disk includes software exclusive to Atari Computing which is not available anywhere else.

We also have a Specialist HiSoft BASIC Reader Disk compiled by Paul Jones to accompany the tutorials.

All issues are available and cost £2.50 each including UK delivery.

Steinberg PRO 24 III



Steinberg PRO 24 is a MIDI recording and editing application which offers song file compatibility with Cubase. For many years PRO 24 was the preferred choice of artists such as Midge Ure, Dire Straights, Bros, PWL who all produced hit records using PRO 24.

- 24 Track music system
- Record, playback and edit any MIDI keyboard
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- Song files compatible with Cubase

For just £10.99 including UK delivery you can get in on the action!

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An exciting compilation of ready to run software programmed by Tony Barker. The source code for all the programs (except Art For Kids) is included and programmers are invited to further develop the software.

- Atax: Space shoot 'em up (ST)
- Brushworks: Full paint package (TT)
- Chambers: Breakout style game (ST)
- Chasers: Space flight game (ST)
- Fantasia: 3D demo (STe)
- FSlide: TGA cool slideshow (Falcon)
- MIDI Battle: Networkable game (STe)
- Official Falcon demo: used by Atari
- Tina: Amazing 70Mb demo (Falcon)
- TT Wars: Classic Sci fi demo (TT)
- STe Boing: Bouncing ball demo (STe)
- Plus unreleased, unfinished projects

And the price for this classic CD is just £10.99 including UK delivery.

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A Please contact your dealer for more information.

Q Any rescue plans in the pipeline?

A No. But if you have any ideas we'd be pleased to hear them!

* If you have any other questions we haven't answered here please do get in touch with us at the contact points listed in our masthead on page 4.

ATARI COMPUTING

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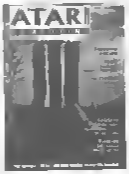

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LEtTers

Missing Chris is innocent

Just a quick note to praise Chris at ASP for his help setting-up my CD-ROM with MetaDOS. Chris talked me into buying a CD ROM a few weeks earlier and asked me what ID and Drive I wanted so when it arrived it was all set up - all I had to do was to copy the files over to my Auto folder and reboot.

I recently needed to change the ID from 5 to 4 so my ZIP drive could run on ID4 which was a two minute job with Chris's help. Well done Chris, keep up the good work and to Atari Computing for keeping us all informed.

Karl Smith by email

▲ Chris from ASP looking after his customers at SAMS'99

Customer always right?

I have been buying your magazine for about a year now and I think it is the best of the magazines to date for the Atari platform. I find your product reviews and Q&A section very useful.

Your ads have helped me locate products that have satisfied my projects. I have found the manufacturers programmers and so on very supportive of their products. I have recently purchased products from Line Audio and have had great support from Roger Janssen. I recently purchased CD Recorder Pro2 from SoundPool and am happy with their product. The SoundPackage is a very nice simple D2D recording editing program. The instructions cover all of one letter size page, and it works very well.

Roger Burrows from Anodyne in Canada has done a great job of improving Extendos to the Gold version. It installs itself in a flash and recognises almost every brand of CD ROM reader. Extendos Gold now has a recorder function that will allow you to copy tracks or whole Audio CD s to a hard drive. CD Writer then will allow you to burn a new Audio CD. It works very well and on any system from an Atari ST upwards.

Dave Leippe Sacramento CA via the ataricomputing web pages

Colour blind?

If you're still using a colour monitor with your ST this just will NOT do! I've recently made the change and am here to dispel some of the common misconceptions.

Mono is boring - this is complete rubbish - there are plenty of games which run in mono resolutions. My favourite mono games include GEM NetHack, all the Ishar games and Oxyd. If you really miss colour games you can always hook up the telly for a session or run on of the various colour emulators kicking about. Decent new games are a little thin on the ground anyway so why not purchase a games console and play on that leaving your Atari free to do proper things!

I found using a colour monitor to write text would often give me a headache and the mono image is soooo much sharper. With 640x400 you get a four times the workspace compared with ST low resolution and you get a much better idea what you're doing.

Attempting to display web pages in colour on an a ST is a challenge! Displayed in mono they're a lot easier to read although the images don't look very good thanks to CAB's poor (but fast) dithering routines.

You can always display images in a dedicated file viewer. Check out Stuart Denman's excellent Speed Of Light GIF/JPEG viewer which does a wonderful job dithering colour images to mono. You can even save memory running in mono.

You won't need a virtual screen program and you can replace colour desktop icons with mono equivalents using a RSC file editor. Most new releases expect at least 640x400 resolution anyway so you won't be stuck with out of date software.

▲ The ASP VGA monitor adapters, designed by Marc Bucroft, enables most (S)VGA monitors to be connected to any Atari.

Track down a SM124 monitor from the AC classified page or pick up any standard PC S/VGA monitor and buy one of ASP's VGA monitor adapters. I doubt you'll regret it.

Matt Burton Derbyshire

Before we used to bang on about getting on-line, switching from using a colour TV to using a proper monitor was one of our favourite themes so it's nice to get back to our roots - it's a straightforward black and white decision!

GET IT OFF YOUR CHEST!

Got something to say on AC's forthcoming closure, or you just what to have a moan about something?

If so, then Atari Computing welcomes your comments, gossip, news, advice and used tenners!

Send your contributions on paper, or preferably ASCII text on disk, to: Atari Computing, 65 Mill Road, COLCHESTER, Essex, CO4 5LJ, UK

Or email us at: letters@ataricomputing.com

We reserve the right to edit letters for reasons of space or accuracy without altering the context

Super Falcon

In search of news about the elusive Phenix computer, Shiuming Lai went to the spring 1999 Atari Messe in Germany...

11 00am First thing I saw upon entering the exhibition hall was our editor on the Atari Computing stand, working hard to entice German punters with the latest edition of the magazine and a big box of sweets After a brief chat it was straight off to meet the Centek team Sales of the CENTurbo I Falcon accelerator have topped 350, while the newer CENTurbo II has already shipped 192 units, and I was all the more intrigued and drawn by the little laser show Strange swirling patterns and dot formations were cast onto the wall, interspersed with words and pictures

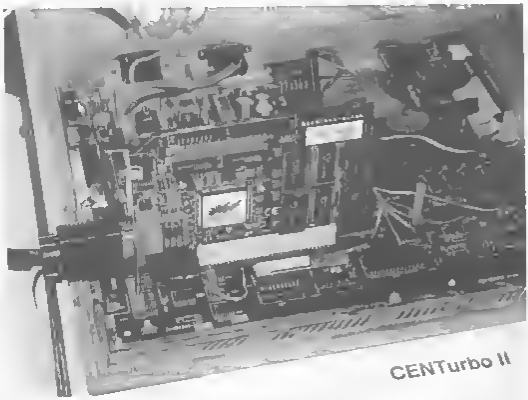
It turned out this laser was being controlled by Falcon and the result was very neat and professional

Centek has joined forces with a special effects company called Class 4 which supplies industrial strength laser and pyrotechnic display systems running on CENTurbo II powered Falcons I spoke with the commercial director Dominique Casytant who has previously worked on the visual aspect of French electronic musician Jean Michel Jarre s concerts (famous for stunning lasers and high-tech open air imaging)

He explained some of the facts behind a very loud and colourful video recording on show demonstrating some of Class 4 s installations at concacts and exhibitions using multi kilowatt water-cooled lasers and fireworks If you fancy some really exciting peripherals for your Falcon this could be it!

Two laser operators/artists explained how the system works with a real time demonstration In essence Class 4 s custom software suite can perform event sequencing (including firework release) and laser head control for actual image synthesis

On our screenshot you can see a resemblance to music software In some respects particularly the theme of time As well as animation the software has powerful text handling capabilities

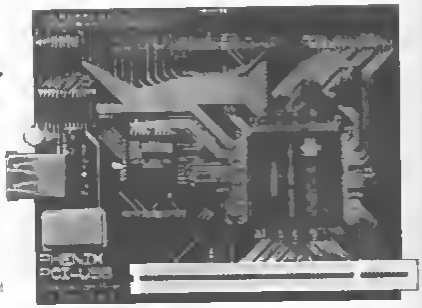


▲ Centek s Falcon PCI adapter card was made purely to test and demonstrate the graphics capability of Phenix ... no chance of getting hold of one even if you have the old CENTurbo II with expansion bus through port

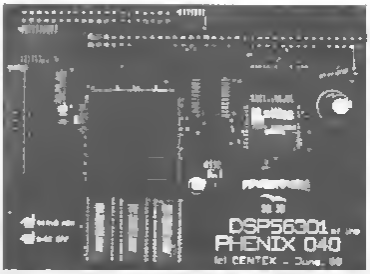
Where is all this leading to?

Falcons haven t been manufactured for years so there needs to be a new computer for this system to run on and develop into something even more powerful Enter the Phenix workstation a machine considered by many as a Super Falcon Originally aimed at existing Falcon users the co-operation with Class 4 lead to the idea of also using Phenix in embedded and control applications

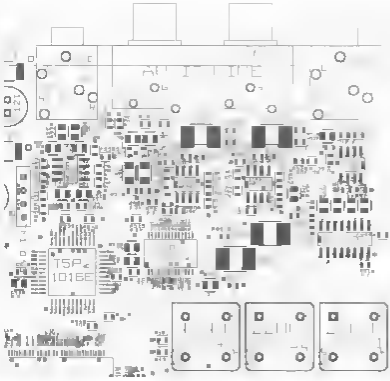
We were given a tantalising preview of the current status of Phenix Starting with real working bits of PCB and silicon implementations of two major sub-systems from the Phenix design were shown In the form of evaluation cards made to plug into the expansion bus through-port of the early Rev A CENTurbo II Falcon accelerators One of these was PatriCia containing a Motorola/PCI bridge with a single PCI



▶ Phenix s planned to accept dev ces of the USB family via this interface once integrated onto the motherboard



▲ The DSP56301 on this card was originally clocked at 60MHz (execution rate of 60 million instructions per second compared with 16 MIPS at 32MHz in the Falcon's DSP56001). It has now been tested reliably at 100MHz



▶ This tasty looking bunch of components is the audio section of the Phenix

socket, a USB port and controller IC. The PCI socket was occupied by a S3 Virge DX PCI graphics card, which should be the standard card supplied with Phenix. This Falcon was running some TOS programs under emulation using a developer version of Centek's Dolmen OS in a high dimensional resolution (1024*768*8) with 16 bit colour depth.

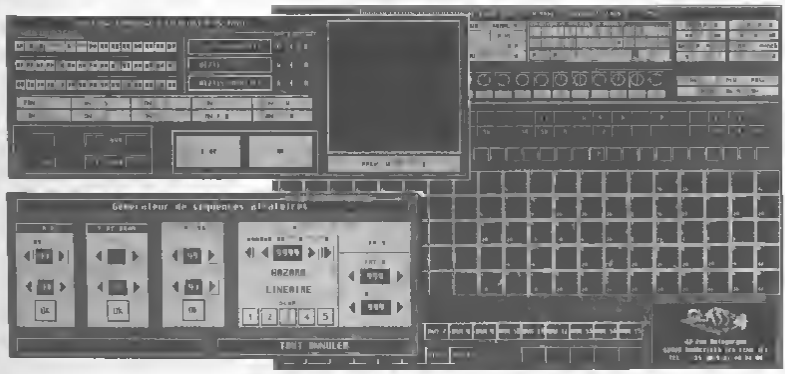
Next was the DSP56301 and 20 bit audio system. In this age of demanding A/V tasks, dedicated signal processing hardware is essential to any computer laying claim to proficiency in this domain. Together with a sophisticated audio system, these are the two most important features of the original Falcon design and will continue to be for its successors.

Centek's CAD station is a CENTurbo II Falcon with 60MHz VIDEL (don't try this at home, kids). All of its electronic circuit board design is done on this computer using a commercial PCB layout program called Platon. I can't think of a more productive use for Atari computers than developing the next generation of machines for us to enjoy.

Rodolphe Czuba, hardware engineer, explained the various parts of the Phenix motherboard design. Presently there are three PCI sockets, one of which will be for the graphics card. The possibility of a fourth socket depends very much on availability of space in the final stage of completion, and is not a prime concern at the moment. Most important now is to finalise the glue logic and track routing for the secondary CPU socket.

One completed sub-system is the audio circuitry, having passed prototyping. A CODEC chip houses integrated A/D and D/A conversion, just like the Falcon albeit with 20-bit resolution and much more consideration given to the auxiliary components. This is no PC game card noise generator: the whole Phenix motherboard is embellished with EMI (electro-magnetic interference) filters placed at strategic points to ensure it runs on clean power, especially critical if you want to achieve high quality audio.

Meanwhile, Centek's programmers were on hand to show the power of the Dolmen OS and Phenix software development tools, like CENTinel, the multi-processor debugger with independent CPU/DSP tracing and inter-processor transaction monitoring. We'll be keeping you informed of progress with more news as it happens. ●



▲ Class 4's team system is like a seriously heavy duty Jeff Minter's Trip a Tron. Whack on those Floyd albums!

When Bengy met Ali

Bengy Collins, MagiC on-line recently interviewed Ali Goukassian about Milan Computersystems...

Bengy: I am sorry to begin with such a difficult question, but please answer as fully as possible. In a prewous interview with Alexander Clauss, I questioned him about the Milan computer. He stated he would not buy a Milan because, for one reason, it offers the same incompatibilities as, for example, MagiC Mac. So I'm asking you to defend yourself. Why should Atari users buy a Milan and run MagiC or N.AES on it as opposed to buying a PC or Mac and running MagiC on that?

Ali: First of all I d like to thank you for this interview and for giving us the chance to talk about the present and the future of Milan computer systems. To answer your first question, which is not very hard for an Atari-fan, from our point of view everyone who believes in the practicality of Atari systems should buy a Milan system. For sure a Milan is not completely compatible with an Atari ST, but the Atari Falcon (when it was released) does not either. We found a way to make it as compatible as possible: the Milan board has two programmable logic chips. Each time Atari software is trying to work with non-existent hardware, the Milan system report an exception error and the missing Atari chips are emulated by our logic chips. That makes a Milan more compatible than any Mac or PC and we also have the possibility to continue development on the chip-programming, which means the Milan s compatibility can be optimised continuously without needing to change the motherboard hardware. The reason for buying a Milan would be that people want an authentic Atari feeling based on modern hardware. When emulated TOS is always based on Windows or MacOS and always dependent on the stability of the host OS. The Milan TOS is booted directly from a TOS chip just like every former Atari system, which means booting only takes a few seconds, before you have a pure Atari computer.

Many people are wondering exactly how many Milan's are out there. Have Milan Sales been high, average or disappointing? Could you give us an estimate of the total number of Milan's in circulation?

Milan sales have been good. They may have been even better, if we could have produced as many as we needed. Please understand, I cannot give you a definitive total. Milan has been on sale since August '98 and we have been able to produce at least 50 per month (Ed: I make that around 500 machines to date).

MagiC Milan has recently been released. In what way do you believe this will change the Milan? Could MagiC Milan replace Milan's version of N.AES as the pre-installed OS?

MagiC Milan is a big win for both Milan and MagiC users. It looks great, works fine and as you can see from the benchmarks on our webpages it s nearly as fast as Single TOS. It makes the whole system look even more modern and friendly. At the moment I can t tell anything about the future of the pre-installed OS (Ed: Since the interview it appears MagiC has been confirmed as the pre-installed OS).

A common complaint of MagiC users and MiMT advocates is that MagiC seems to be unstable on certain, if not all, systems (i.e. Falcons). How does MagiC Milan perform? Is it stable? Have you experienced frequent crashes? Furthermore, what are your first impressions regarding MagiC Milan?

We ve been running MagiC Milan for more than one week continuously and it has been working fine. There are no more crashes than with MagiC on any other Atari and we only experienced crashes if the user runs old or incompatible software like games.

MagiC Milan does not, like the original, totally replace the Milan OS. In fact, MagiC Milan works alongside it. What is the reasoning behind this?

The reason for this is very easy to describe. Adding MagiC to another platform means re-programming the hardware dependent parts of any new Atari System. That s the reason why development for the Falcon and HADES machines took so long and why the HADES version isn t running very well. Our developers have been reprogramming the hardware dependent parts of the original TOS to make them PCI and ISA compatible. To ensure MagiC Milan is as compatible as possible we decided to only develop the non hardware dependent parts of MagiC. The big advantage of this approach is that each time we release new hardware versions MagiC will still run with the new TOS-base and always retain its compatibility.

Does MagiC Milan have the same "snappy feel" to it that it does when ran on a Falcon or ST?

I would say it s even better because it s incredibly fast. The subjective feeling is similar to running a 300MHz Pentium PC.

The Milan has been great for the Atari world. Although it is debatable if the Milan actually converted any PC, Macintosh or Amiga users, there is no question it has prevented many people leaving our beloved platform. What should we expect from Milan Computers in the future? Will we ever see the Milan take advantage of technologies such as PowerPC (or even multiple 68060) processors, built-in USB, Firewire, or even DVD ROM support?

YES YOU WILL! We ve been quiet for a while but we have the most incredible news to share with everyone you could imagine. If everything works out fine, in late autumn/early winter we will have a brand new Milan, called "ATARI Milan", that will feature SDRAM, USB, an 060-processor, DVD-ROM support and a big range of (new)

software. This all will be produced by Motorola and AXRO GmbH in co-operation with Motorola Computer systems and it will be sold in several hundred (computer) shops! This has all been top secret for many months, but there's a range of software developers working on Milan software games, hardware add-ons, new graphic card drivers and so on. But it will be possible, if we are able to get the name "ATARI" under license from HASBRO. So our brand new Milan 060 will probably be called: Milan 500, and it could be the one and only Atari successor! Good news, isn't it?

For a "dead" platform, the Milan040/060 really has quite a bit of competition! Currently available there's the Centurbo II which offers incredible Falcon performance as well as maintaining compatibility. There is also the Hades040/060, and soon, if we are lucky, the Tempest accelerator (which claims that it will offer PowerPC processor's with speeds well over 200MHz). To make things even harder for you, in the near future the Phenix060 is planned to make its entrance. What is your opinion of the Centurbo II, Tempest, Hades, and Phenix? Does Milan computer welcome a bit of friendly competition or are you guys beginning to feel the heat?

Of course we welcome that bit of friendly competition, but as you can see we're trying to deal in another market. We've been working very long and very hard on that deal, but wait until you see the price (which will be published in August '99), then objectively I would say that no one will ever pay DM 3000 (around £1100) for a 040/060 system or DM 700-800 (£250-£300) for a hardware add-on. And with the new Falcon compatibility card for about DM 400 (around £150) more, Milan machines will become a very powerful Falcon compatible workstation.

When the Milan arrived, the powerful Hades040/060 was already on the market. What motivated you guys to introduce an entirely new clone, and how long was the Milan in development?

We developed about one year and our motivation was, at least, to make a much more flexible system that costs less than half the price of the HADES. I think we succeeded on all points.

It sometimes seems the German Atari market is blind to the needs of the Atari users in North America. Where can Americans/Canadians purchase a Milan from?

Yes, it seems so. Regarding Milan Computer systems we do have a lack of manpower for distribution in North America. But with the new system we'll have a very strong and working partner already used to international distribution. We expect the new Milan systems to be available in Europe in early 2000 and in America from April 2000.

Do you believe the Milan is the future of the Atari Platform? If not, what is? What are your feelings regarding MagiC Mac/PC?

Of course I do believe that Milan is the future of Atari systems. Nothing else can be because the Milan will be the only Atari clone which will be an original Atari, which will be produced by a big partner like Motorola and which will be built in larger quantities. I like MagiC Mac/PC as well as some other emulations, but as I explained already they are all based on existing, fat -and not always stable- OS's.

The Milan website is huge, packed with information and downloads updated regularly, and is available in many languages. There is no question that it is truly one of the most useful and impressive Atari related sites available to internet users. Since the arrival of MagiC Milan, will we see a separate "MagiC Section" of the pages, containing MagiC Milan related downloads/patches, reviews, and information?

There will be a seperate MagiC section but not before our webmaster has a Milan computer. Until now we had to sell every machine we could build but from June/July onwards Joachim Furnellaz, the webmaster will continue website development on a Milan running MagiC Milan.

I noticed you have a banner on the Milan main page stating "Over 300,000 visits in one month." If this is true, it is very impressive, and proves once again that the Atari Platform is far from dead. How many visits, on average, do the Milan pages receive lately?

To be honest I have not checked the number of accesses for more than six months but I can truly assure you that the banner is not lying. I will try to find out the actual number of website accesses as soon as possible.

New some easy questions. What computers, other than Milans, are used in the production of the Milan and the Milan waksite? Which software is used by the team on a regular basis?

Actually we use a Mac for website development, running MagiC Mac, but only until we can spare a Milan system for the webmaster. We also work with PCs for the billing system, but since the Milan060 card has been available, we are working with Calamus on an Atari system again, before that we used a Mac.

Why did you stay with the Atari platform for so long, and why do you continue to support it?

We love it and we love the way people love it!

Do you consider the Milan a success?

Yes, I would say so, and especially looking towards the future it will become an even bigger success! But we have to keep in mind this all depends on our Atari name license negotiations with HASBRO. If they don't agree, we won't be able to launch the system the way we want to.

Finally, is there anything you would like to say in conclusion of this interview?

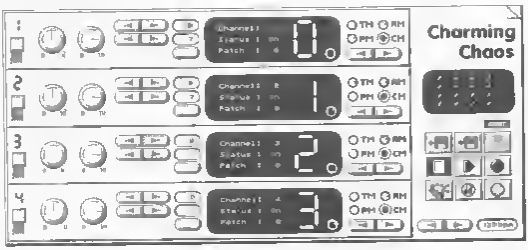
Yes, we, the Milan team, want to thank you all for supporting Atari systems for such a long time, and we will try to give back what Atari was obviously not willing to give you back anymore after 1993. We will produce and offer new powerful systems for a low price and with the feeling that they have something very special. PCs and Macs do not have!

Thank you Ali Goukassian

▲ The Milan team. From left to right: Uwe Schneider, hardware development; Ali Goukassian, founder/management; Thomas Gottsch, founder/support/graphic card driver development; Michael Schwangen, TOS development.

Charming Chaos

Mark Wherry tries to tame the Electronic Cow in the china shop...



Never has a program been given such an appropriately British title as Electronic Cow's latest creation Charming Chaos, as that is exactly what it is - charming chaos! Based on an earlier freeware release, the program is a MIDI algorithmic composition and performance tool featuring the polished professional front end that has become a trademark of Electronic Cow releases

An algorithmic composer is a program that creates random music based on pre-defined formulas, or algorithms. It sounds crazy, but it isn't quite as bizarre as you might think.

Then there was chaos

Charming Chaos can be run either as a standalone program or as an accessory, useful for running it alongside your regular sequencer. On launching the program, the main screen is displayed which consists of four rack modules and some global controls. Each rack module represents a separate independent musical generator which can be switched on or off, and all four can play at the same time if required.

The output of these musical generators is based on any one of the ten algorithms that are set up within the package. These are user definable and a default set is provided to get you started. Preset number four on it's own, to me, seemed like instant Pierre Boulez Piano Sonata satisfaction.

Each generator has two assignable MIDI controllers which are volume and pan by default, a MIDI patch and channel selector, and the ability to choose which real time MIDI input performance controllers are active.

One of the features that impressed me the most with Charming Chaos was the amount of factors that could be controlled by an external MIDI keyboard during playback. On each rack you can activate time, pitch, amplitude, and controller modulation controls which determine which aspects of the performance can be changed during playback. The MIDI implementation chart in the manual provides a full description of how to achieve all of the possibilities.

The controller modulation setting also determines whether or not the controller mapping for the algorithm assigned to that rack is active. Controller mapping makes it possible for continuous controller data to be sent while a track is running, such as volume and panning events.

The interface

I personally found the interface pleasant and intuitive to work with, though a few brief trips to the manual were occasionally needed to clear something up. I think that adding BubbleGEM support should be seriously considered and would be the icing on the cake here.

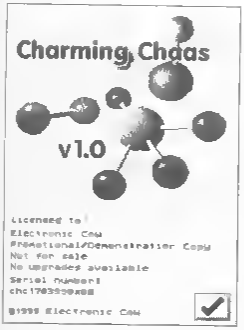
Everything is controlled by two main dialogs: the main performance dialog for controlling the overall performance, and the DNA Seed Construction dialog for composing your algorithms.

You have complete control over the algorithm via the latter mentioned dialog and this includes rhythmic templates, which notes in the scale are to be used with the range, and how frequently the note changes, velocity maps and more. I think that a preset popup menu for rhythms would be desirable, and a preset popup menu for scales highly desirable. Common scales, for example, major, minor, pentatonic, and the various modes could then be called up with ease and without reference.

The overall performance as set up on the main dialog can be saved, including all of the parameters and the ten algorithms. Each algorithm can also be loaded and saved independently via the DNA Seed Construction dialog, and in this way individual algorithms can be shared between different performances.

Background

Throughout the twentieth century we have seen composers trying to broaden their approach to writing music, in a search for new ideas, partly as a reaction to excesses in romantic music of the previous centuries, composers such as Mahler, Wagner, and so on. While we saw composers such as Debussy and Stravinsky broadening the existing language of music, the composer Schoenberg pioneered a new mathematical approach to music called serialism. Simply, all the twelve notes of the scale were given equal importance and arranged in an order, then mutated and this was this piece.
American avant-garde composers, among others, experimented with so-called alleatoric music, which is essentially music of chance. Part of the attraction was that a single performance would never be the same as any other, though these pieces were usually based on existing fragments. Some composers recently have experimented with using computers in composition, most notably through IRCAM, a music research centre in France.



Manual labour?

The ASCII manual is well written and gives a breakdown as to the function of each part and control of the program. However, given the initial complexity of the program, I feel an illustrated ST-Guide hypertext would be very helpful and perhaps a tutorial would make sure new users can quickly achieve interesting results.

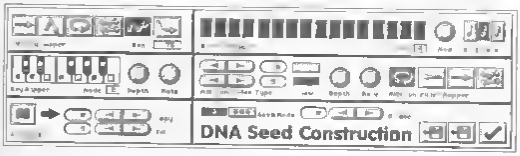
The Results

What you will get out of the program largely depends on what you put in, and I was surprised at how easy it was to gain listenable results in a very short time. When you do come up with a set up that is yielding interesting results, a performance can be saved as a type 0 MIDI file, which is far more convenient than re-patching your MIDI cables!

Conclusions

The Atari platform has seen many similar programs over the years, but the user interface, performance tools and price tag make Charming Chaos appear very attractive. It never crashed once and there are many more details to the program which sadly I don't have space to go into here.

Charming Chaos is the sort of package that will attract fans of the avant garde in music but should also appeal to those looking to broaden their musical ideas or, as the manual suggests, anyone lacking musical inspiration at a point in time. The program has scored highly because it achieves what it sets out to do, in style. Any criticisms are minor and while you don't always go away humming the tune, it's a whole lot of fun to use. D



CHARMING CHAOS

Publisher
Electronic Cow, 5 Exhill Close, Redditch, Worcestershire, B98 9HY
Email: electronic_cow@dial.pipex.com
http://dspace.dial.pipex.com/electronic_cow/
Price £15 plus £2 P&P

System All Atari's, 1Mb memory minimum, 640x400 resolution or higher

Pros
Great interface, excellent MIDI I/O implementation, capable of inspiring ideas

Cons
BubbleGEM and ST Guide support would be nice

90%

This could be the only CD-ROM you'll ever need...

We're delighted to announce the launch of our renegade CD-ROM. In addition to the full versions shown on the cover shots below there are also full versions of Edith Pro, Two-in-One and Adresse which adds up to a total worth in excess of £100!

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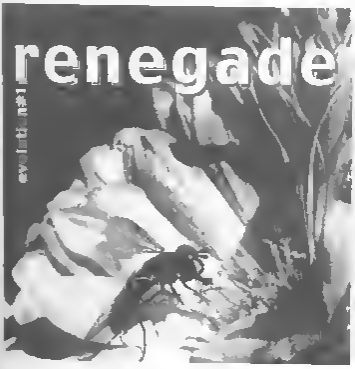
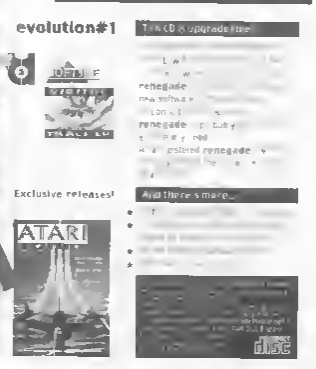
ATARI COMPUTING
£14.95



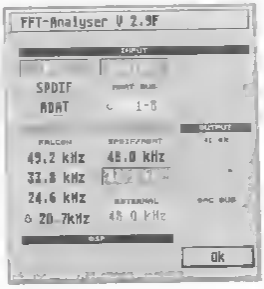


Quiet please!

Danny McAleer rids his recordings of a sound parasite...

Noise is a pest Despite your best efforts it pops up everywhere in sound recordings Even those supposedly oxygen-free gold-plated cables the salesperson at the hi-fi shop sold you can't eliminate the fizz of an SH-101

Fortunately SoundPool have contrived a piece of software to at least alleviate our recording nightmares Denoiser is designed to work both as a stand alone application or as part of SoundPool s DSP suite which also incorporates parametric EQ and FFT analysis in other plug in modules for use in Audio Master



Pick a frequency any frequency

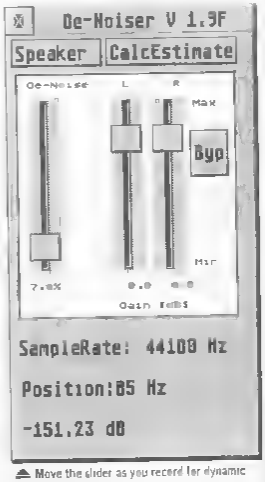
It features an "intelligent" de-noising system which in contrast to the traditional noise gate which simply cuts out all frequencies when the sound falls below a definable level actually samples the unwanted intruders removing just them leaving a result more polished then Mr Sheen s sitting room

Bits and bobs

In addition to the de-noiser element of the software there are also a few off line processing tools within the shell These include Normalise (a function that optimises the volume of a selected file) and things to affect your stereo mix including balance left and right channels swap channels mix to mono using a choice of left right or both signals There s a normalise function which can be incredibly handy since once bereft of its noise a recording can benefit greatly from a little amplitude injection

Anyone familiar with SoundPool software will be immediately at home with the sample rate options dialog box which provides a choice of frequencies (for recording and playback) including a selection of Falcon sampling rates and if you have an FDI connected the more useful 44 1 and 48KHz From here you can also select the input source for your audio using either the Falcon s own analogue inputs or a digital input (such as the FDI or ADAT interfaces) using the DSP connector All these settings plus all the data pertaining to your working environment (window positions sizes and colours and so on) can be stored in a configuration file

Although no actual editing of waveform data within the Denoiser software is provided there is a sample view This window comprises two sections an overview of the sample below and a user-definable zoom area in the upper part Using a combination of keyboard short cuts mouse clicks and menu entries it s possible to negotiate both parts of the sample view zooming in and out and scrolling forwards and backwards through the waveform with relative ease



Move the slider as you record for dynamic de noising!

As well as setting left and right loop markers (for playing passages continuously) the sample view is also used to define blocks for analysing Once created these blocks can be modified using a combination of [Shift] and the left or right mouse button moving the start and end points respectively As many

Amongst the waves of wonderful warbling lurks the noise. Seek it out.

blocks as you d care to highlight can be defined those that are deemed undesirable can be simply removed by pressing [Delete] when the mouse cursor is above them

There are effectively two ways to operate the denoiser

- Using the functions Record and Record Mono it is possible to sample audio directly into the software and apply the de noising process in real time
- The second option is to perform any processing after the recording is completed (on an existing file) which is certainly my preferred way to work because I can always return to my original if things go awry

In both cases the noise must first be "sampled"

Noise pollution

Removing noise from a sample using the Denoiser is straightforward

- Identify a part of the recording where the noise is prevalent such as before or after the music or during a quiet period
- Mark it using the sample view window
- The software analyses this section draws a plot in the EQ transfer function window and then it s ready to clean up your act so to speak

The degree to which a recording is de-noised" can be controlled using the intensity level slider (measured in percentage) This control works in real-time allowing you to find the best compromise between your original recording and one that sounds like it s been squished by a ten ton steam roller It s actually a little more subtle than that, but over indulging in the denoiser does have applications particularly if you re inclined to being experimental with your processing hardware and software To complete the controls there s even a by pass button which makes it easy to compare the processed signal with the original

Finished result

It took just a matter of minutes to clean up some rather ancient record ngs from a selection of analogue cassettes compared with the arduous task of manually setting up a noise gate and parametric EQ SoundPool s Denoiser takes all the effort out of this unquestionably dull post processing labour and would be of substantial benefit to anyone who uses analogue recording materials and sources that can sometimes generate more noise than rush hour traffic.

Perhaps the only contentious matter is its price especially bearing in mind once you have one module you ll want/need the others to complete the set Taking into consideration the price of similar plug-ins on other platforms the asking price is very reasonable It s a lot cheaper and more agreeable than working with an obstreperous engineer ✪

DENOISER V2.9

Publisher
SoundPool

UK Distributor
System Solutions 17 19 Blackwater Street Dulwich London SE22 9RS
Tel 0181 693 3355
Email info@system solutions co uk
http //www system solutions co uk/cafe/

Price
£149

Requirements
Falcon030 VGA/RGB monitor 4Mb RAM hard disk FPU and non FPU versions are provided

Pros
Modular design Excellent quality results

Cons
Will be perceived as expensive Flimsy manual which lacks detail in parts

81%

Super Burnout

This is a pure adrenaline pumping racing game with no silly characters power-ups or spoilers to get in the way of the action You don t even have to prefer motor-cycles to get your kicks because apart from the graphics there s nothing n the gameplay to distinguish this from most car racing games

Super Burnout can be played against the clock on an empty track, or against six computer-controlled opponents or head to head against a friend in split screen mode. Each player can select from six custom bikes which offer different levels of grip acceleration and maximum speed and although there s no mention of authenticity with bikes named Sliding Thunder Lightn ng Racer Wheels of Terror Reflex Killing Turtle and Super Rabbit it s safe to assume Yamaha and Honda have spent their sponsorsh p money elsewhere

Transmission can be automatic which makes it easy to follow the racing line flat out with momentary lifts on tight corners or manual where gear changes are performed by pressing the clutch (C Button) along with the up/down buttons on the joypad The enhanced Jaguar controller is supported and enables fingertip shifting control us ng the left/right joypad buttons quite why this can t also be implemented on the standard controller is beyond me

There are eight track layouts "from around the world and although there s no mention of them being the authentic layouts for Japan Hungary Germany France Canada Brazil Australia and America they do provide a variety of challenges

When you re ready for Championship mode you race against six opponents on all eight tracks during which your start position for the next race depends on your finish position in the previous race The trick is to punch the accelerator at exactly the right moment to slip past your opponents then follow the racing line (the darker area of track) which makes you harder to overtake

The on screen graphics are well up to 1995 standard with individual control over the vd FX voice FX and music level Given the cho ce between 14 AOR (Eric Clapton style) music tracks or whacking up the sound FX volume I opted for the latter! The game settings high scores joypad configurations and sound settings are stored in the cartridge even with the power off

Jonathan Adams

SUPER BURNOUT

Supplied by The Console Centre Halifax Road Birchencliffe Huddersfield HD3 3BS
Tel/Fax 01484 540926
Email morgan magee@cableol co uk

Requires Jaguar console

Pros Plan of track and throttle on screen helpful bike selection makes it easy for both beginners and experts alike to get something out of the game

Cons Couldn t find any way to abort a race or change modes level care

85%

Photo therapy

Falcon users can now join in the Virtual Light Machine fun, Shiuming Lai checks out the party...

When Atari had Jeff "Psychedelia" Minter working as a Jaguar software developer, it was almost predictable that he would channel the machine's graphical power and his past experience into making a pretty impressive sound-to-light generator. All it needed was some easy way of feeding in sound. Just as luck would have it, along came the Jaguar CD unit, for which Jeff programmed built-in Virtual Light Machine (VLM) software.

Quite how light can be virtual when you can actually see it is perhaps not relevant. VLM is cool, and now Falcon users can also enter the chill zone thanks to No/Escape. Whip! takes VLM a stage further by being expandable with modules and is supplied with the necessary details on programming your own effects.

Fortunately, no instructions are necessary to use Whip! as a very simple control screen contains all the buttons which are all clearly labelled with text and graphics. The left half of the screen is the sound desk, where some sliders allow you to adjust input gain (aided by a neat two channel oscilloscope) and output attenuation. Whip! basically reads analogue signals coming into the microphone socket and loops it back out to the headphone socket. Somewhere in between, it's in the digital domain, so the DSP chip can get its paws on it and do fancy things.

It's that effect again. Let's see how long before some joker produces an ASCII art VLM module

Discs we tried it with

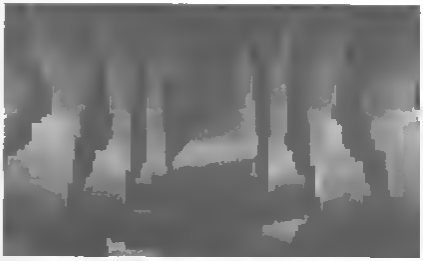
A couple of albums which begged to be used for this review were:

- Moon Safari, one of last year's most acclaimed releases from French electronic band Air. The spacey, sometimes retro aural landscape complements Whip!'s default effects settings wonderfully.
- Radium, Arkos (1), Ruckkehr Der Kosmischen Kuriere. I bought a copy of this from the Neuss Atari fair in April, where its producer Michael Nehls of June Audio was using it to demonstrate the sound quality of the Line Audio Jam PRO Falcon audio expander. The interesting thing is it's also produced with the Jaguar VLM in mind. This one has more rhythmic aggression, and some dark ambient/ethereal synth chorus passages, making for an emotional VLM show.

The right half of the screen displays the program information box and the current bank of VLM modules in a scrolling list. Some effects may have variable response parameter settings, to create different moods according to the type of music played.

At the time of writing there are already 12 VLM files available for Whip! Three of those are from Evil of the prolific Dead Hackers Society (a top Swedish demo crew), who has been quick to ply us with VLM versions of some of his trademark effects. Among the other effects, here are some of my favourites:

- Classic. Old school kaleidoscope with city night life fluorescent pinks, blues and purples swirling and arcing in time to the music.
- RGB Split. Three soft-focus coloured lights gently pulse and sway with dizzying superimposed simple harmonic motion. At the points where they intersect the colour values are summed, giving white when all three (red, green and blue) are exactly



This shaded polygon object has a tendency to Hoover the screen

Fractal circles in your mind

In-line. The motion and colour intensities can be adjusted, giving the impressions of lying drunk on a dance floor to regaining consciousness from heat stroke in a desert.

- Julia. Using a low input level, this bean-shaped fractal twitches like a bodily organ freshly carved out of its host.
- Stars. Gut wrenching 3-D starfield
- Flight. A series of frequency spectrum plots zoom towards the screen, like the Flying the bacon video feedback effect in the bonus stages of Tempest 2000 on the Jaguar. The signal peaks give it added vertical dimension, and to top it off the lines turn into something resembling cosmic dust as they come forward. A real flight of fantasy

Whip! is very user friendly and highly enjoyable (although if you suffer any degree of photo sensitive epilepsy I strongly advise against use). I can think of a few things to make it even better. If it could incorporate a CD player control panel to work in conjunction with a CD-ROM driver, it could read music over the SCSI bus (and output on the DSP port in case you have high quality offboard DACs) and actually function a bit more like the Jaguar VLM as well. At times there is a delay while the hard disk is accessed to load the modules, it seems. It makes no difference if you have 4 or 80Mb RAM under your Falcon's bonnet, it will still do this.

Probably the most effective addition would be fill patterns to lead in and lead out in the random cycle mode, to smooth transitions instead of jumping abruptly with a blank screen in between. That would give it real panache.

Anyhow, I'm sure No will continue to develop Whip!, it's a Falcon "must have" - and if you've been looking for a good excuse to buy that massive 42" hang on the wall flat plasma screen television, this could be it. ⊙

Top tips

- Don't chain the Falcon into the signal path between the source and speakers, otherwise the sonic fidelity will be degraded. Tap off either at source (from a spare output like the headphone socket of your CD player) or en route.
- If sound quality doesn't matter and you don't have a hi-fi source to hand, but a CD-ROM drive with analogue outputs, use this. Wire it to the Falcon's microphone input and start a music CD playing using something like CD Player by Alexander Clause, or CD Audio (bundled with the ExtenDOS Gold driver) from Anodyne Software

WHIP! 0.3

Author
No (Norman Fe[illegible]) Escape
Email: n12ve r1 tu-[illegible]ilmenau.de
http://escape.va[illegible]

Requires Falcon with colour monitor (RGB/TV or VGA), 4Mb memory minimum

Pros Well-presented, can produce sense of relaxation, comes with programming information document

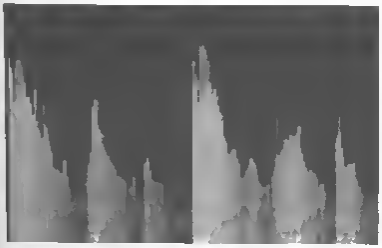
Cons No digital input, can't read directly from CD-ROM drive

86%

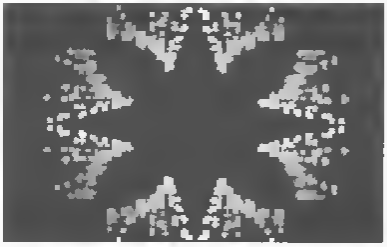
June Audio contact

To order a copy of the June Audio CD as used in this review, and a list of other titles, drop a message to Michael Neihs, line audio@usa.net

Sharpish peaks!



Ooh, I like this one!



Family Tree v2.2

Reviewed by Glyn Hale

'Atari, that's a games machine isn't it?" is the usual response when I tell people that I keep all my family history records on my ever ageing Atari computer. While it is certainly true Atari Corporation first came to prominence with their arcade machines in the 70's they also produced user friendly and versatile home computers which people are still using today, even though the company itself no longer exists. As a result of its integral MIDI ports it quickly became, and remains, a firm favourite with musicians and is still found sitting alongside the mixing desk in many recording studios. Its graphic interface was one of the precursors to Windows at a time when most PC users were still struggling with the complexities of DOS.

But what of family historians? How well have they been catered for in the Atari marketplace? Family Tree is a user friendly genealogy program which was written by Ian and Mark Baker for their own family history and which uses the Atari's graphics environment to the full.

System requirements and Installation

Unbelievably in these days of massive memory requirements and Gbytes of hard disk storage, Family Tree can be run on a 1Mb machine with only a floppy disk drive, although a hard disk is preferable. Installation is very simple, since as the program can be run using floppy disks only, it can be loaded directly from the supplied disk. Most users, however, will want to install it on to their hard disk which is a simple matter of dragging the files to a folder on your hard disk. On line help is provided as an ST Guide format hypertext and there is also a comprehensive manual supplied in ASCII text format.

Data entry

When the program starts you are presented with an alert box or menu from which you can start a new tree or load an existing one. Clicking on NEW TREE will present you with the file selector which has been initialised with the name Treedata, a further click on OK will create a folder where your data files will be stored. You can have a different file name for each folder. As is usual on the Atari most of the programs functions are accessed via drop down menus using the mouse and no typing is required other than when entering information. The menus are File, Edit, Display, Custom, Print, Preferences and Help, and these then present you with options to perform operations like cut and paste or to open other windows.

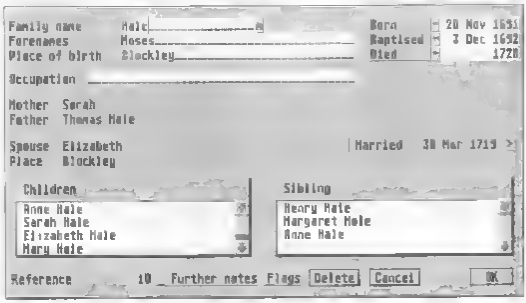


Figure 1. Initial information is entered by clicking on **New Person** in the **Display** menu and you are then presented the Person Entry screen.

New Person (Figure 1). Here you can enter names, place of birth, dates of birth, baptism, death and occupation. There are also fields which show parents, children, siblings and marriage details but these are automatically filled in by the program and are for display purposes only. When entering a new person into the tree there is an additional button labelled Next. Clicking on this stores the data and clears the Person Entry form ready for another person.

Names and places of birth can contain any characters you can type but dates have to be in the correct format. If you know the year but not the month or day the program will still be able to sort people by date of birth. If you are not sure of the year you can use circa, which can be extremely useful. Marriages are used to cover any form of relationship which might produce children.

The authors state the concept of legitimacy has no place in their program but there is space for 20 spouses! The marriage form allows space for ten children although when this is full you can scroll down the list and enter up to forty children of a marriage in all. (The authors say they will allow for more if asked!) Adding new children to a family is again a simple process. Clicking on one of the empty spaces in the Marriage form brings up the Person Selector form. If the father's family name has already been entered into the database the Person Selector will already list this on the assumption that the child will be named after its father, and the rest of the family are automatically listed there too.

When subsequently viewing the child's Person form you find the program has automatically entered parents and siblings correctly and you can then enter further details. It is not possible to delete a marriage without first removing all of the children of that marriage which seems sedious.

Flags, useful for selection, can be set to store information on, say, direct relations there are eight definable fields. Editing is straightforward and it is easy to

move around from one record to another with just a click of the mouse From the Set Preferences menu you can do automatic backups at timed intervals and also customise the way many of the functions of the program work

Currently Family Tree can import and export all data in GEDCOM format, except the custom designed flags and I have never encountered any major problems moving information between Family Tree and programs on other platforms

Tree Displays

Ancestors and descendants can be displayed and printed as charts with each successive generation indented However it is the marvellous Custom trees that makes this a "must have" program although this function is only available with the GDOS or SpeedoGDOS graphics handling utility installed To start a custom tree you select NEW from the Custom menu and the Person Selector opens to allow you to choose the first person in your Custom tree The program then opens a full screen window with that person s name in a dashed line box at the top left hand corner If their parents are included in the database there will be a small box drawn at the centre of the top of the box and similarly boxes appear for children and spouses Clicking on any of these boxes will add their names neatly entered relative to the original person As you can then position them on the page compiling drop line charts with this program even easier than drawing by hand with much better printed results

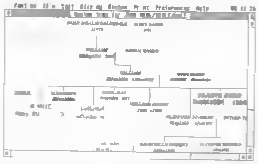


Figure 2 This example tree demonstrates the facility of using any mixture of fonts to produce trees which rank amongst the best computer generated ones I've seen

Conclusion

It is perhaps the way that the display of trees is handled that in my opinion makes Family Tree more than a match for other currently available programs Oh and I've left the best bit until last Family Tree is freeware!

About the author

Glyn Hale is a Music Technology Consultant and has his own family history website at, http //www argonet co uk/users/ghale/

This article is a reprint of that first published in the April 1999 issue of the monthly **Family Tree Magazine** 61 Great Whyte Ramsey Huntingdon Cambs PE17 1HL Tel 01487 814050 Fax 01487 711361 Email family tree magazine@hotmail com The current subscription rate for 12 issues is £24 20 including UK post and packing

FAMILY TREE v2.25

Authors
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ian baker@lloyd doyle com

Status
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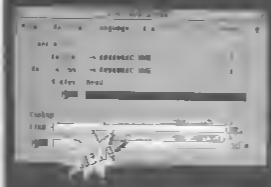

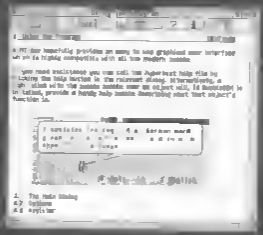

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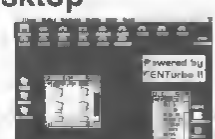

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ATARI WORKSHOP

It's all in the MEX

Shiuming Lai invites old punk Paul Mex to talk about the heady world of music and his current activities...

My most outstanding recollection of Brighton is a beach with masses of pebbles, and an ambitious plan to build sand-castles ruined. It's also home to a professional Atari-based recording studio, literally within sight of the shore and smelling distance of the sea air. Paul Mex is the proprietor.

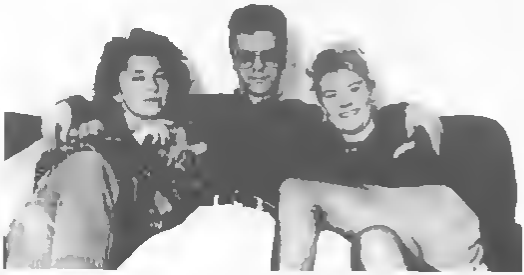
Paul, what are your company's main objectives and how did you become involved in the business?

Primarily I run three different operations that often inter-mingle with each other:

- *Mex One Recordings is a high quality programming and recording project set-up, which also hosts post-production digital audio enhancement and CD mastering facilities.*
- *State Art is a label I formed with a colleague called Kevin O Brien, and is designed as a platform for abstract, experimental and esoteric creations. Our aim is at releasing innovative challenging material.*
- *I also act as an independent music producer and have over half a-million sales to credit.*

My background originates from being a "live" musician in the late 70s playing either lead or bass guitar in underground punk and post punk outfits. After a succession of flirtations and failures with different groups and record companies, the next natural step was to concentrate totally on the recording side of the industry. Having built up a number of contacts from my musician days, I managed to work in the recording environment with many diverse artists ranging from "pop stars" Whom! to respected "Jazz-rock musician Robert Wyatt. Eventually, a high selling music mogul from the early 80s that had produced one of my previous bands enticed me to become one of his "in-house" music producers for his record label.

In 1989 I decided it was time to go it alone and put together the Mex One Recording facility, to complement becoming a freelance independent music producer. State Art was formed in 1993.



Mex with Keren and Chelle, now better known as Alisha's Attic

That's quite an occupational transition, even within the same industry. It's not so surprising that you adopted the Atari platform when you decided to enter the computer aspect of music technology, was that an unreserved decision or did you experiment and explore first?

I got into the ST scene when I became "in-house" producer for Sigh Music (the company mentioned above). The company policy was to create/program the MIDI side of things using Ataris exclusively. At that time the main program was Pro 24, which I have to admit, I hated. Having been used to hardware sequencers, and a little dabble with Commodore computer packages, it was fairly difficult for me to adapt to the ST. Having mainly been brought up on Roland machines, I found that Pro 24 didn't really suit my way of programming or working. However, there were no alternatives open as the company wanted to keep everything in the same domain so that it was easy for projects to be moved around between the in-house producers and remixers. Often one person would program, another would record, whilst someone else would mix. This way individual projects could remain as fresh as possible and not sound too staid through only one person's input. However, things did often go off the bail through there being "too many cooks" syndrome!

Sigh Music had one major studio and a bunch of pre production programming suites. At one point, Mr Steinberg and some associates came over from Germany to see our operation utilising the Pro 24 program in full effect. We were told to be extremely nice to him and praise the product accordingly. I was working in one of the pre-production programming suites at the time of his visit and courteously just said hello and shook his hand!

It seems many people found Pro 24 difficult and awkward to work with, did you persevere until Cubase arrived?

When I left Sigh in 1989 to start Mex One, I immediately left the ST behind me and swopped straight back to Roland hardware sequencers. Despite all my contemporaries staying with the ST and the program advancements, I was never tempted back until teaming up with my State Art partner, Kevin O Brien in 1993.

One of our first projects involved producing a girl singer, which we started at Kevin's place. Consequently he engineered

From thrashing guitars and smashing up drums to computers and software. No glamorous fast cars or swimming pools

the sessions and used his ST with Cubase. Although I glanced over his shoulder and noticed that the program looked much more intuitive and Steinberg had obviously come a long way from Pro 24, I still stuck with the hardware sequencers for a little longer.

The revelation finally came when I was in a friend's music shop as he was putting something together using Cubase when the phone rang. This was also the point that I had entered the shop. He waved his arms at me, indicating that I should amuse myself as the phone conversation was going to be a long one! So, there it was. Cubase linked up to a load of synths. I started to dabble and before you knew it, was hooked. I suddenly realised the possibilities of manipulation and speed one had with the program over hardware based sequencing. Within five minutes I had the basics of the program totally working for me. Being a man of action, I immediately (the next day) got my own ST with a copy of Cubase.

After about 18 months of being a total Cubase user, I read a review about the C-LAB Falcon dong 16 track hard disk recording. As my old Fostex E16 was on its last legs, this seemed like the perfect replacement system. I investigated the Falcon and as a result, ditched the E16 in Cubase Audio 16's favour. Of course the Falcon also brought about other options like CD recording and sound processing. It was at this time that I stumbled across System Solutions who kitted me out with extra hard drive space, CD writer and SoundPool processing products.

Even though the computer music market has somewhat left the Atari behind, the majority of musicians I meet still prefer this platform. I have a friend who is one of Yamaha's top programmers working on all different platforms. He is always telling me how he feels like he is working with a musical instrument when programming on Ataris. He also reckons the MIDI timing on Ataris is still superior to other platforms. Occasionally I dabble with PC related music software, but always feel happiest with the Falcon. Despite all the gleaming flashing lights of the PC, you always know where you are on the Falcon. Also if anything goes wrong, it's so much easier to sort out on an Atari as it's as if the machine was made for music. My motto is: "If it ain't broke, don't try to fix it" and I certainly don't have any immediate plans to replace the Falcon whilst it continues to do the job at hand!

Have you worked with any (new, then or still) rich and famous artists in your time? Go on, drop some names

I've worked with a fair few named artists over the years. Probably the most famous demos I ever recorded were for Wham! This was back in January 1982, when I engineered the well documented sessions in Andrew Ridgeley's living room on a humble TEAC 144 Portastudio. We recorded "Wham Rap" and an early rendition with the original lyrics (re written for the final record) of "Careless Whisper". These were the recordings that landed George and Andrew their record deal, followed by fame and fortune!

At the time I was so poor that I couldn't afford a mike stand. We remedied this by getting a broom and stuffing the handle down the back of the sofa to keep it in place while the microphone rested on the bristles. Now there's a sight to envisage – George Michael singing into a broom. It didn't seem funny at the time, but on reflection now, it is obviously hilarious! Bizarrely in 1995 I co-wrote and co-produced some drum and bass tracks for the great English comedian Frankie Howerd's Song and Dance Collection album. Another crazy scenario to imagine: Frankie Howerd singing/talking over jungle tracks. The tracks for this album were sequenced with my old ST running Cubase.

I have co-produced and co-written tracks on both Kim Fowley (legendary American underground 60s/70s punk producer) and Toyah Wilcox's recent album releases. These tracks were all constructed and recorded using my current C-LAB Falcon.

In 1987 when I was still at Sigh, I spent two years solid working with two sisters called Keren and Chelle Poole, whom finally found fame last year under the name of Alisha's Attic. Several records that I produced and co-wrote with them at the time, were released in America and Japan, and all programmed on the ST running Pro 24.

The past year has mainly been dedicated to working with new artists that will hopefully make a name for themselves shortly. Recent new release projects have been: One In A Million by Saved By Zero (Stil(e) Records 12"), a dance act that I co-wrote and produced for using Cubase Audio for multi-track recording and Audio Master for some editing on the material.

Chill by Four Shaped Rotation (Rotation Records CD), a trip-hop poetic group that I co-produced using Cubase Audio for the multitracking, Audio Master for the file creation, and CDRecorder Pro for making the PQ master disc for manufacturing.

Do you have any amusing memories to share?

The high pitched tone! I was working on a song called "Male Stripper" by an American group called "Man 2 Man Meet Man Parrish", with an associate called John Hamilton. The basic joke being that John is old and I am deaf! Anyway, we had been

The Crowbars: live at Carey Place in Watford, 1977. Left to right: Vernon Thomas (lead vocalist), Paul Mex (lead guitarist)

Band career highlights

The Crowbars was Paul's first band, where he was responsible for guitar. His first professional group was The Gambit of Shame, touring extensively and releasing a numerous records. John Peel on Radio One liked us quite a lot and often played our records. We appeared briefly in a late 70s Hammer House Horror feature film with Christopher Lee and Peter Cushing, which has been shown on TV a few times.

Even though we never found pop stardom, one of our records, No Bounds, became a bit of a cult cut, with the added credibility of being produced by 60s icon Robert Wyatt."

working hard all day on this mix when one of our (young) colleagues came into the studio and screamed at us "What the hell is that noise? John and I looked at each other bemused as we couldn't hear a thing. Our colleague pointed out that we had let the drum machine code slip into the mix somehow resulting in a high pitch tone sounding throughout the song. As it happens the record went out like this even the mastering engineer didn't spot the noise and nobody actually said anything until the record had sold around 40 000 copies. It was only at this stage that the record company got a re-cut and the record went on to reach number four in the national UK chart. The joke being that it was that high pitched noise that got the record off the ground dogs love that song!

The beauty of this computer technology is that it is easy to set up your studio at home without the need for costly premises. As a result, when I first started Mex One back in Watford I had my loft converted to accommodate the equipment. Practically the first job I got was to help the legendary 60s group The Troggs remix an album of their early hits. This was all going smoothly and in the middle of it all their manager called me and said that Channel Four wanted to come and interview Reg Presley (the singer) at my place as he was leaving the country straight after the mixing sessions. He also said it would be great to have a studio backdrop for the TV interview and so it was the ideal situation while he was mixing. I explained to him that my loft certainly wouldn't be like one of those "Abbey Road" backdrop scenes you often see on the screen. "But I've heard the sound coming out of your studio," he said. "It doesn't sound like a loft to me."

I explained to him that technology had come a long way since the 60s and a lot of records were now made in people's bedrooms. Undeterred he arranged for the interview to take place on the following day. The next morning Reg Presley arrived followed shortly by a car of four people. One of the party had a largish bag that I presumed contained the equipment. I started to discuss with them how technology was becoming so advanced and small nowadays. They explained that they didn't have any equipment and were the production team – the camera sound and lighting crew would be along shortly in a truck!

So there it was the small studio that I was trying to keep private within a residential area so as not to upset the neighbours (it was all sound proofed so had this episode not happened no one would have been any the wiser) was soon to have a fair amount of attention shed upon it. Moments later a large truck arrived and the crew unloaded what appeared to be masses of gear! There were people all over the place as there was a crew of around 35 people. To make matters worse The Troggs manager arrived with an entourage and larger than life attitude. I had never met him before and he was one of these concourse 60s rock 'n roll managers complete with large cigar and Rolls Royce. To say that the neighbours were inquisitive by this stage was an understatement and I noticed curtains twitching all down the road. Anyway everything went to plan although when the piece was finally shown on TV it couldn't have lasted longer than a minute and a half! So my studio that I was trying to keep secret from the neighbours was exposed with practically my first clients. Luckily I had good understanding neighbours who all saw the funny side!

Is that the time? We'd better move on to the competition! On behalf of Atari Computing's readers, many thanks for your hospitality and a fascinating insight, Paul, we wish you continued success in the coming years.

Mex One current kit-list

RECORDING C-LAB Falcon MKII running Steinberg Cubase Audio 16 Zero X SoundPool's Audio Master DeNoiser and CDRecorder Pro 2 (digital input/output through Steinberg's FDI and analogue out using Steinberg's FA8 both produced by SoundPool) Tascam DA20 DAT recorder Aiwa XD S260 DAT recorder Philips CDD2600 SCSI CD recorder Kenwood DM-3090 MiniDisc recorder Aiwa AD F410 cassette recorder and Technics RS TR575 cassette recorder

MIXING Mackie CR1604-VLZ

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SAMPLING Ensoniq EPS 16 Plus Workstation

SYNTH MODULES Yamaha EMT 10 and Yamaha FB 01

DRUM MACHINE/MODULE Roland MC 303

The range of work that we undertake is extremely varied ranging from day to day. For multitrack recording work Cubase Audio 16's the program used. Often we are asked to archive recordings that are old or come from a cassette. DeNoiser is the program that handles this task as it is especially good at eliminating hiss. Audio Master is used for digital editing and creating final audio files for export to CDRecorder Pro 2. A lot of our daily work involves producing master PQ CDs or short run promotional CDs for small independent record labels producers and musicians. The Falcon and SoundPool products are invaluable for these types of tasks and provide the immediate cash flow for keeping the operation afloat.

The Competition

Paul is kindly offering the complete State Art collection to one lucky reader, all you have to do is correctly answer three easy questions and enter the prize draw. Five runners-up will receive State Art singles. "Slaves In Heaven" by Layla Kaylif and the Ancestors Of Sound. "These recordings are not my most commercially successful projects (although watch this space for the Sensual Assassins project that we have licensed to another company. There is a fair promotional budget for getting this one off the ground, a video is currently being put together that has cost £25 000 to date so they should work it hard in order to get some of their money back). However these projects have no bounds and represent the sound of the State Art philosophy that we are creatively very happy with!"

The rules

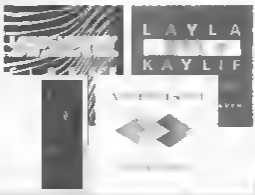
Entries must be received by Monday August 16th 1999 at 65 Mill Road, Colchester, CO4 5LJ, England when the draw will take place. Renegade Publishing accepts no responsibility for entries delayed, lost in the post or with no return address and no correspondence will be entered into. Atari Computing contributors, their families and pets are not eligible to participate and the judge's decision is final. Answers on a postcard are acceptable if you do not wish to cut the magazine.

The questions

1. What does Paul use for his sequencing and audio production work?
(a) Falcon030 (b) Roland sequencer (c) Commodore computer

2. When was Mex One Recordings established?
(a) 1990 (b) 1989 (c) 2001

3. In which English southern-coast beach resort town is the studio located?
(a) Blackpool (b) Bournemouth (c) Brighton



Turbocharging the Falcon

John Kolak considers his choice of Falcon accelerators...

Prior to the FX board, the standard method for accelerating computers was to add a daughterboard to the computer containing a high performance processor clocked to a higher speed, while the motherboard remained clocked at its normal speed

Both Blowup FX and Nemesis took a new approach by adding faster oscillator components which clock the computer at a higher speed than it was intended to run. This approach opens a Pandora's box of potential problems because the computer is running faster than it was designed to go - a situation made worse due to the Falcon's flawed design (Atari rushed it into production when they decided to get out of the computer business). To complicate matters, not all Falcon production runs were identical.

Problem Falcons and Falcon Problems

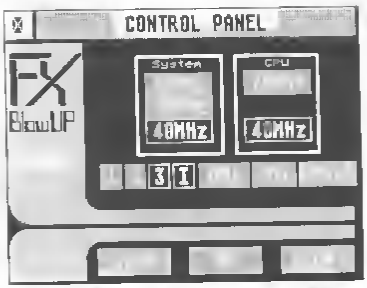
Both the Blowup and Nemesis manuals recognise potential problems. The Blowup manual states: "Although we have tested it carefully and it works with the Falcons of our numerous beta testers, there is no guarantee that it will function properly on your special Falcon." The Nemesis manual states: "With so many differences in the Falcon, it is impossible to say how each installation affects the various ones that exist."

The greatest problem lies in the DMA circuitry in the SCSI support area. Both products provide troubleshooting instructions. Nemesis provides a hardware patch and FX provides hardware and software solutions. This is perhaps the greatest area of difference in the acceleration aspect between the two products. Nemesis is sort of a "one size fits all product". If it works in your machine great, if not, there is no means of adjusting the timing for fine tuning. FX offers six buttons on its control panel for fine tuning of the timing adjustments.

As a last resort, both products offer lower acceleration speeds in case your Falcon will not support maximum acceleration. The FX oscillator speeds are 18 and 20MHz, whereas the Nemesis oscillator speeds are 20 and 25MHz. While this appears to indicate Nemesis is the faster product, the issue is more complex than this. The hardware acceleration features of the Nemesis and FX designs are near identical - they both employ faster oscillators and cut into the Falcon motherboard in nearly the exact same places. However, the FX design offers additional features which may make the FX a better choice for some users.

FXtra features

- Falcon memory access logic. The FX bypasses Falcon logic which treats the 68030 processor like a 68000 which yields a 33% speed increase in processor memory write speeds.
- Processor clock doubling. In addition to accelerating the bus speed (like Nemesis) the FX control panel also enables clock doubling of the processor.



▲ The FX Control Panel eXtension (CPX) provides fine tuning buttons to adapt the accelerator to the widest variety of existing Falcon production runs. Note the dialog box also allows selection of processor speed.

- TT-RAM. (Also known as FastRAM or burst mode 32 bit memory) FastRAM is significantly faster than standard memory.
- Resolution enhancement. The Blowup Screen Expander hardware has been incorporated into the design which overcomes the limitations of the Falcon video system and provides TrueColor at high resolutions depending on the capability of your monitor. (Nemesis also accelerates the system bus and enhanced screen performance can be achieved using the Videlity software which is available separately).

How fast is fast?

When I first tried a Falcon it felt "sluggish" compared to my TT. At the time I was not aware of the relationship between the performance of the computer and the amount of screen data the computer has to process at higher resolutions and colour depths.

A review of the Crazy Dots II TT video card where the GEMBench results degraded from 470% to 138% as the colour depth increased from 2 colours to 16 777 216 (24 bit) colours respectively clearly demonstrated how much the computer slowed down as it has to process more video data. This effect is evident in the sluggishness of the Falcon colour video modes - see the boxout at top of opposite page.

Clocking Strategies

In recent years the trend has been to increase the clock speed of the processor by doubling or tripling it compared to the motherboard clock. The TT was originally a 16MHz computer, until at the last minute, the processor was moved to a daughterboard and double clocked - a marketing triumph!

Real time benchmarks demonstrate doubling the internal processor clock does not double overall system performance and the performance increase can be as low as 10 or 20%. For example PCs are typically sold based on the processor's internal clock speed. Ratings such as the

Benchmark Speed Tests
Using NemBench 2.1 precision CPU/FPU profiler

Hardware	Falcon	Nemesis	Nemesis	FX	FX	FX	TT	TT	TT
speed	16.7 MHz	20.40MHz	25.6MHz	40MHz	32.40MHz	50.0 MHz	32.0 MHz	32.0MHz	[illegible]
colours	16 or 256	16	256	256	16 or 256	16 or 256	16 or 256	256	[illegible]
Integer Multiply (16 bit)	100%	125%	156%	112%	125%	156%	125%	112%	[illegible]
Integer Divide (16 bit)	100%	125%	156%	112%	125%	156%	125%	112%	[illegible]
Linear (stalled) Integer	100%	125%	156%	112%	125%	156%	125%	112%	[illegible]
Interleaved (piped) Integer	100%	125%	156%	112%	125%	156%	125%	112%	[illegible]
Float Multiply (64 bit)	102%	254%	318%	229%	254%	318%	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Float Divide (64 bit)	101%	252%	316%	227%	252%	316%	251%	226%	[illegible]
Linear (stalled) float	99%	220%	276%	198%	220%	276%	219%	198%	[illegible]
Interleaved (piped) float	107%	219%	276%	197%	220%	276%	219%	198%	[illegible]
16 bit read (100% hit)	101%	125%	156%	112%	125%	[illegible]	125%	[illegible]	[illegible]
16 bit write (100% hit)	85/61	111%	143/121	146%	163%	116%	98%	[illegible]	[illegible]
32 bit read (100% hit)	100%	125%	156%	112%	125%	[illegible]	97%	101%	[illegible]
32 bit write (100% hit)	85/61	111%	141/119	150%	167%	142%	130%	[illegible]	[illegible]
ST RAM									
Linear 32 bit read	86/67	111%	140/123	112/98	125/111	92/[illegible]	[illegible]	114%	[illegible]
Linear 32 bit write	85/61	111%	140/119	122/97/[illegible]	125/111	90/[illegible]	[illegible]	101%	[illegible]
Linear 32 bit copy	85/61	111%	144/119	112/98/77	125/111	91/119/[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
TT RAM									
Linear 32 bit read	NA	NA	NA	117%	129%	145%	159%	[illegible]	[illegible]
Linear 32 bit write	NA	NA	NA	149%	166%	171%	134%	[illegible]	[illegible]
Linear 32 bit copy	NA	NA	NA	131%	146%	140%	[illegible]	[illegible]	111%

▲ All speeds are compared to a stock Falcon running in two colour duochrome at 16MHz as a base 100% value. DSP benchmarks are not listed because all products mentioned clock the DSP to 50MHz which yields a predictable 156% performance level

Cyrix PR300 M2 (Pentium II class) chip are attained by taking a 66MHz bus and three and-a half clocking the internal processor core, then performance rating against an Intel brand 300MHz chip. Armed with this knowledge, a Falcon FX running its processor at 40MHz doesn't sound nearly so bad!

It's hard to believe the Falcon clock situation is opposite to this trend - while the rest of the world is clocking the processor faster than the motherboard, the Falcon processor clock runs SLOWER than the system clock! The Motorola 68030 processor runs at 16MHz and the system clock runs at 32MHz!

The FX double-clocks the processor chip to 40MHz which provides considerably more grunt than Nemesis which although it provides a higher 50MHz system clock, actually runs the processor clock at half speed (25MHz).

This performance difference is evident in the benchmark data. The FX without CPU doubling benchmarks illustrate the FX is feeble accelerator compared to the Nemesis. However the last column, which shows the FX running at maximum speed, easily outstrips the Nemesis maximum performance.

The benchmarks also show the degradation of ST RAM memory access performance as colour depth is increased compared to the performance of TT RAM which remains constant. This illustrates the importance of adding TT RAM/FastRAM to the Falcon for maximum performance - even though a few (mostly older) software titles may not support it.

Installation

Installation is not for the faint hearted. Although both products include illustrated manuals with troubleshooting tips, both products require cutting fine traces on the motherboard, cutting legs on chips, and soldering wires to these points. If you are not comfortable with this don't DIY!

The Nemesis installation process has you install it one step at a time and test each step, with excellent "if you see this, good, if you see this, TURN OFF YOUR COMPUTER NOW!" instructions which is better than the FX manual which merely provides a checklist of things to look for in case of trouble.

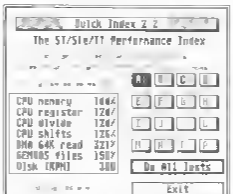
How Safe is Overclocking the Falcon?

There is some disagreement over this issue. There have been rapid reports of increased Falcon failure rates since the advent of overclocking accelerators but both Titan and Blowup don't think there's a connection.

Titan's David Encill states: "Most chips in the Falcon are rated to operate up to 70 C - very hot!" and Blowup's Georg Acher says: "I don't think that you should be much concerned about overclocking, since in today's computers this is mainly a heat problem. But the chips on the Falcon (even the CPU and Videl) stay relatively cool compared to a Pentium II." The instability in the Falcon stems from delicate timing, and not from the heat itself! It seems to me it's more likely any increased failure rate is due to bodged upgrade attempts but that's pure speculation on my part!

Analysis

The impetus for writing this article was to try to ascertain whether an accelerated Falcon could equal or outperform a TT 030 computer (or to put it another way, did I make a mistake selling my TT to buy a Falcon?) so let's take a closer look at some benchmarks.



▲ Quick Index provides a useful comparison between Falcon and TT models because both computers have TT medium resolution in common (640x480x16 colours)

Continued on page 31

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Creative thought is null and void without appropriate tools to help develop and eventually realise your concepts Empower yourself with the most advanced and complete set of audio products available for Atari computers to give your work the professional edge

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DA Workstation Rack

Take your Falcon on the road in this tough steel 2U rack housing The internal media tray can take a 3 5" IDE hard disk (much faster than the 2.5" In standard Falcons) or SCSI with additional kit, plus the original 2 5" There is also room for a MO 4 FDI and CENTurbo II accelerator Serious power On the front panel is an Atari-standard external keyboard socket for Mega ST(E) and TT keyboards **Falcon: £299 supplied and fitted, £349 with keyboard/Freekeys kit**

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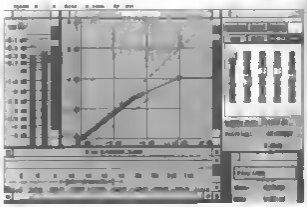

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MIDI/sync.	£99
Multi-dynamics processor	£139

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Hear the complete Native DSP Mastering Suite in action on a live recording Presented by Robert Schulze Lutum

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The Falcon Digital Interface (FDI) is your connection to CD players DAT recorders and MiniDisc systems supporting the S/PDIF format Exchange audio signals between outboard gear and computer completely in the digital domain Supports both electrical (coaxial) and optical (Toslink) connections for I/O plus on-board 44 1/48KHz sample clock, compatible with all professional audio software such as Zero X, Cubase Audio and DeNoiser **Falcon: £199**

Also available Falcon ADAT interface, S/PDIF patch-bay SMPTE units

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The source for SoundPool

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Designed using Pagemaker 5 on Mac. Transferred to Atari TT030 via Ethernet and ftp/ftp. 41 dpi 06 24 300dpi by Sum 8 2/24

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[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

All tests performed using Quick Index. The results, except the last column, are referenced with a standard TT030 which represents 100%.

Continued from page 29

Darek Mihocka's Quick Index is a great way to get a quick comparison to the TT because one of the options allows for percentile ratings of the system to be compared to a stock TT.

According to Quick Index only the FX Falcon running at maximum acceleration is able to exceed TT processor speed and keep up with 16 colour TT video speed (with NVDI installed). Running in 256 colours Falcon video performance drops off rapidly and although it's not fair to compare performance with a stock TT (which doesn't offer a decent 256 high resolution colour resolution) the sluggish screen response is disappointing.

The significance of using NVDI is evident when comparing the two columns which contrast display performance with and without NVDI. Compared to a TT all other ST models exhibit poor TOS scrolling performance: the Falcon seems to suffer worst of all - even the STe is twice as fast in this benchmark.

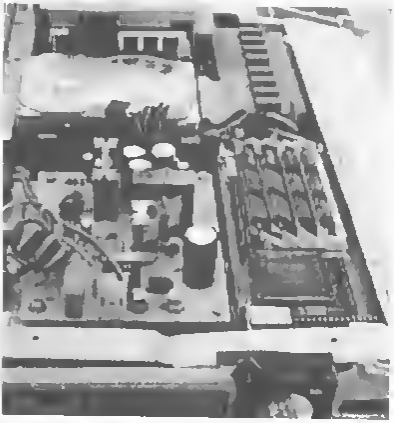
Falcon Relativity

Nembench compares your accelerated Falcon to a stock Falcon running in duochrome (essentially monochrome) and indicates the relative speed improvement. However, because the Falcon is a relatively slow computer anyway, the benchmarks are effectively reporting a faster turtle is still a turtle!

The Quick Index benchmarks are interesting because they can also compare the performance of Falcon accelerators to a stock TT - which is much harder to live up to.

It's also worth pointing out screen performance and processor speed should be examined separately. For example if windows open and close slowly, and text scrolls at a crawl the machine will feel sluggish irrespective of the underlying processor speed.

In ball park terms the Quick Index benchmarks indicate a stock Falcon running in 16 colours feels roughly as responsive as an ST but the underlying processor speed of the Motorola 68030 will perform processor intensive tasks such as ray tracing, image conversion and other tasks performed while the screen is idle roughly four times faster.



FX board mounted in the Falcon processor direct slot. Note the optional cooling fan mounted next to the cartridge port.

Again in ball-park terms a stock Falcon running in duochrome resolution offers snappy screen performance and using the accelerators reviewed here you can enjoy similar screen performance in 256 colour resolutions.

Enter CenTurbo II

System Solutions kindly provided Nembench results for the TT 030 and the CenTurbo II Falcon accelerator (also distributed by Systems Solutions and reviewed in AC#12), which appear in the last column of the benchmark table. The CenTurbo II is similar to the Blowup FX in concept, except Centek have incorporated a separate 50MHz 68030 processor directly on the accelerator board. This overcomes the 14Mb memory limit (CenTurbo supports 128Mb) which exists because Atari did not wire all the memory control lines on the 68030 processor - yet another symptom of rushing the Falcon to market? One striking indicator is the superior handling of TT RAM in the CenTurbo and TT NemBench results which indicates the FX is fighting against the Falcon's crippled design to add FastRAM whereas the TT and CenTurbo were engineered to utilise this feature of the 68030.

Summary

The products mentioned in this article cover a wide range of price and performance but the Blowup FX still offers excellent value for money. System Solutions still have a few in stock so get them while they've got 'em! ✪

Email: jkolek@jps.net

BLOWUP FX

Manufacturer
Acher, Eberl and Seibert GbR

UK distributor
System Solutions, 17-19 Blackwater Street, East Dulwich, London SE22 8SD
Tel: +44 (0)181 693 3355
Email: sales@system-solutions.co.uk
http://www.system-solutions.co.uk/

Cost £99

Requires
Atari Falcon 030

Pros
Economical Falcon performance enhancer, well engineered

Cons
No step by step installation testing

90%

hades

Running Out of RAM with Dave Barkin...

The Atari Corporation has long disappeared yet the Atari platform still has life! Keeping this in mind three years ago I went out and purchased a Hades 68060 computer. I was the first on my block (probably in my country) to buy one of these machines. Since then I've conscientiously updated the ROM chips and this machine remains my main computer. Considering I've since purchased a 300 Mhz Power PC Mac that's saying something!

I enjoy using the Mac, there's some software for which there simply is no competitive Atari alternative, but software such as Calamus SL, Das Repro, Das Layout, Photoline and quite a few others make the Hades my machine of choice especially for final output. So let's take a closer look.

The Hades computer

The Hades is available in a number of configurations. My machine configuration is as follows:

- A floppy drive
- IDE Hard drive
- SCSI port
- 4 PCI slots
- 2 ISA slots
- Standard Atari serial port
- High speed (250,000 baud) serial port
- Mouse port
- Joystick port
- MIDI
- LAN port
- Parallel port
- VME slot
- Standard IBM keyboard connector
- 8 memory slots

The memory slots must be filled with a minimum of 4Mb of RAM and can be filled with up to a whopping 1 Gigabyte - and if you have that memory you can forget about "out of memory" messages! Over the three years I've had the machine I've slowly increased the memory and currently have 512Mb installed. It seems overkill but I needed the additional memory to edit 100Mb and larger image files. The Hades can be purchased in mini tower or full tower configurations. You can also save yourself quite a bit of money by purchasing the components and building the system yourself - I'd rather be eaten by starving baby elephants, but I'm sure there are plenty of masochists out there keen to get stuck with such a job.

How it works

The Hades supports a range of graphics cards. I'm currently using an ATI M64 board which features 4Mb of video memory and is quite a bit quicker than the ET4000 I originally used. My ATI board uses a modified version of the software driver originally written for the NOVA graphics card and supports resolutions from monochrome to 32 bit colour, although (unlike the ET4000) it doesn't support ST Low (300x200x16) or ST Medium (640x200x4) resolutions. It works well and seems happy driving a 17" monitor at 24 bit resolutions.

The operating system is a modified version of TOS 3.06 (used in TT machines) and comes on four ROM chips. So far I've replaced these ROMs twice, new releases became available to eliminate bugs and compatibility problems. RAM memory is considered as contiguous ST RAM although it acts as high speed RAM. My machine uses standard SIMM chips although newer Hades motherboards now utilise EDO SIMM memory modules. EDO RAM is about 15% faster then standard RAM so new purchasers can expect their machines to run faster than mine - although the actual speed increase will be nearer to 5% rather than 15% because overall speed is more dependent on processor speed than memory access speed.

Speaking of processors the Hades can be purchased with a Motorola 68040 or 68060 chip. The 68060 fitted in my machine is a 50 MHz chip clocked to run at 60 MHz by my machine. For anyone looking at PCs and Macs running in excess of 300MHz this doesn't sound very impressive but in real world tests the machine is a lot faster than it sounds, more detail on this later. I can't think of a good reason to opt for the 68040 variant, if you can afford a Hades, the extra cost of the 68060 shouldn't be a problem.

▲ Here's my Hades, positioned in pride of place on my desk sporting a TT60 logo, added by the Canadian re-seller of imported Hades machines.

Using the Hades

Using the Hades isn't much different to using any Atari. There are some additional programs to place in your Auto folder, one to recognise the built in maths co-processor (FPU) and a few others. There's also a Hades desktop accessory to turn the Motorola cache on/off which is needed because some, mostly older, ST software won't run with the cache on. The Hades accessory reads its information file in which you can easily specify how individual programs use the cache system. This INF file is an editable ASCII file and once setup will automatically configure each program to make optimum use of the system caches. The popular HD Driver software is used to support hard disks and ICD's driver software will not run on this machine.

Compatibility

Always a difficult question to answer because everyone has different requirements. Some programs like Calamus 98/99 run happily at the fastest settings the machine is capable of, others such as my vintage copy of WordPerfect, need to be set to the slowest settings. Some programs won't run at all - graphical games generally won't run even with a graphics card capable of displaying them. This isn't the place to give a list, if you're serious about buying a Hades check with

your dealer to find out if the software you want to run works before making your purchase

Although some of the programs I depend on must be run on the slowest settings that statement is meaningless because this is still very fast! Programs I regularly use include Calamus SL (sorry Calamus 1 09N doesn t run) Outline III Das Repro, Photoline PixArt, Pagestream Das Repro Studio Photo and Das Vector Pro Certainly most commercial quality programs written in the last two years should run on the Hades

Hades versus TT

In general terms the Hades machine is between six and twelve times faster than a standard TT I m saving my favourite comparisons against my Mac but in the meantime here are a few timings (in minutes seconds format)

```
Soften Filter Da  Repro
On= Meg file
TT      1 18
Hades   0 08
Screen Redraw  alamus SL
Complex Vector file
TT      0 07
Hades >0 01
Vectorise in Calamus SL
70K image file
TT      1 10
Hader   0 08
```

Pretty impressive numbers eh? Using a TT I was able to spend my time learning the intricacies of coffee making! So there s a clear speed advantage over Atari s fastest machine but let s take the fight to the Mac

My Mac 8600 PPC running at 300MHz, Power PC 8600 is around 75% as fast as the current Apple G3 models (according to Norton Utilities) so taking that into consideration let s see how the Hades stacks up Obviously we can t run the same software on different platforms so we have to software differences into consideration For example vector redraws are much faster in Outline III or Das Vector Professional than Calamus SL and different again using Adobe Illustrator on the Mac

Image Processing

Once again bear in mind software as well as hardware is being compared which is especially important when comparing Quark Express with Calamus 98 because Quark unlike Calamus is NOT a WYSIWYG (What You See Is What You Get) program - images rasters and vector objects are blown up thumbnails and text is often a special screen font. Calamus shows exactly what will be printed (There is an optional Calamus SL Module which displays thumbnails but because I have enough memory I don t need this) I should also point out the Mac is I tted with a very fast ATI Exclaim VR graphics card and is also equipped with 512Mb of memory and consequently isn t set to use virtual memory

Here's the mandatory "guts" p cture the editor den a ded Wha mysteries he ma de heals me! All I can add from a non-techy perspect ve is the components have a quality "look and feel" about them

```
Redraw 20Mb TIFF file from
100% to 200% Zoom
Photoshop v5 01        0 04
Photoline v9 30       >0 01
Das Repro v1 41       >0 01

Rotate 20Mb TIFF f le
11 degrees
Photoshop v5 01        0 13
Photol ne v  30        0 10
Das Repro v1 41        0 40

Redraw 250Kb Vector File
from full page to 100%
Illustrator v7 0       0 03
Das Vector Pro v2 12   0 12
```

These are impressive omes for both machines Exactly what the hardware/software balance is impossible to tell but my overall impress on is that the Mac is a faster machine It s easy so pick and choose times to support any standpoint but as Mark Twa n said There are lies damned lies and statistics For example I use Photoshop on the Mac which generally seems quite a bit faster than Das Repro apart from the Zoom function but I have also compared Photoshop to Photoline which is the fastest Atari program There are other plenty of other Mac image processing packages some slower and others faster than Photoshop but the bottom line here is that the Hades is a competitive machine

hacks

As I mentioned above there are some areas where Atari software s not competitive with what is available on the Mac This mainly consists of rendering/modelling software But I much prefer Calamus to Quark and the combination of Photoline/ Das Repro to Photoshop Das Vector Pro is a much more powerful program than Illustrator

Problems, rumours and limitations

Over the three years I ve had the Hades I ve only experienced one ser ous problem a factory defect which made using 32Mb SIMMs impossible These SIMMs and apparently only these SIMMs need a particular connection with the CPU and on my mach ne this connection was severed and it took a while to diagnose the problem then find a technician to fix it The manufacturers Medusa Corporation were helpful tracking down the problem and even offered to repair the machine (if I could get it to them) so full marks to them for that

I ve heard about one person who connected his machine to another computer using the SCSI "Bus Arbitration" which enables two computers to share one SCSI drive but unfortunately this blew the SCSI controller chip in his machine Maybe it s a generic fault or maybe it was a faulty controller chip

The Hades supports MiNT and Geneva multitasking but it doesn t support MagiC I ve heard there s a version of MagiC under development for the Hades and it can t come fast enough for me

I was also told when I purchased my Hades that a card to offer PC compatibility would soon be available This turned out to be vapourware Various sound cards and other options are available, including one to offer Falcon DSP compatibility again If you re serious about buying a Hades check with your dealer

Although there are other Atari clones available and under development the Hades offers raw processing power and TOS compatibility which s what it s all about I remain happy with my machine

Basic BASIC!

One of the computing laws of programming is Stockmayer's Theorem. It states "If it looks easy, it's tough - if it looks tough, it's damn near impossible". Stockmayer obviously didn't have HBASIC when he wrote his statement...

Over the past few months I've shown you some of the basic functions of HBASIC. We can now continue with our PDO program adding much more features. This issue we'll concentrate on

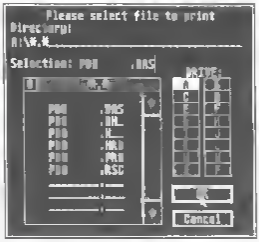
- Adding the file selector for the print/view option
- Creating a Program Options dialog with the ability to specify a viewing program
- Checking for a command line and automatically going to the print command straight away

To leave more space for an in depth explanation the source code listing is only included on the Reader Disk this issue

The File Selector

The file selector has been one of the nicest features of the Atari platform since the first TOS v1.0 machines sold in 1985 and it's one of the most useful programming tools and is fully accessible using HBASIC. The function comes in two versions: one for AES versions 1.62 or earlier (below TOS 1.4) and another one for later AES versions

Although the layout of the file selector has changed slightly over the years as extra refinements have been added the pre-AES call only differs in one way: it doesn't include a prompt "message" such as "Please select file to use" and so on



I've included three extra subs/functions in the PDO source which are: SUB aes_version, SUB InitFileSelector and FUNCTION fileselector$. Both sub routines are used by the file selector function

- aes_version returns your AES version
- InitFileSelector sets internal settings for the main file selector function

The selector routine takes in one parameter, which is the message that is to be displayed. The routine first checks if the starting path has been defined (which is what InitFileSelector does) and then decides on which call to make, depending on your version of the AES. The variable fspath$ after the call is the last path of the program, which the extension of the search field as well. The loop is needed to get rid of this so the path and name (returned in fname$) can be returned by the function

How can this be used? Well, if you find the ProcessUserMenus section and find "CASE view", you'll see I've used this function to get the user to select the file they wish to view. If the user clicks on Cancel, the function will return a null string, so this is also checked. Another feature we'll look at more closely next issue is the execution (running) of the external viewer (the "execute" statement). The same thing has also been done in the print file section

The Program Options form

The code has been inserted as "CASE progopts". The first thing we do is to get the string for the external viewer in temp_l$ so that if the user clicks on Cancel, we can replace the stated address with the old temporary version. The program then goes into a loop, so that no matter what button the user presses, the form will never close until either the OK or Cancel button has been pressed. If the Cancel button is pressed, the file viewer disk address is changed back to what is was. If the Change viewer button was selected, another file selector is displayed... useful eh?

When the routine actually finishes there's a "global" (shared) variable named global_viewer$ which contains the name of the viewer which is used when the view file option is called on. Please note that the keyboard shortcut has also been added to SUB do_keybd

The Command line

Remember in AC#12 we introduced the COMMAND$ command? Well, we're going to use it now - there's going to be automatic print option when double-clicking on a printable file (assuming it's had it's file type registered with the program)

When the program first loads, the prinfile$ variable is set to the command line. If this is null the program will simply ignore it, otherwise the variable commandline is set to 1, and the print option's ran. In the print option, if the commandline variable is set 0 (which means a command line wasn't used) the program automatically asks the user for the file to be printed. In this case, if a file has been double clicked on, the program is executed and the file printed straight away without having to select the file again

In the next few remaining issues I shall be covering

- The execute routine, including the option for the VA protocol (below)
- Using the VA protocol to call the external viewer. That is, in a multitasking system, if the program and the external viewer is being executed, both programs can communicate with each other
- The Registration validation (including exclusive version of the latest validation routines from ENCHANT), including generating a real registration key using the check digit idea in AC#12.
- Using ENCHANT. A full guide to each of the benefits of the using the system, including window dialogs, ST Guide help, BubbleGEM help, popup menus, check boxes etc
- Insights into the Virtual Language project.

ENCHANT

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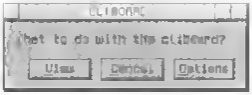
Paul can be contacted at
Email: Paul.jones31@virgin.net
http://vzone.virgin.net/paul.jones31/

Suggestive Remarks

Mike Kerslake with some suggestions for better Atari computing and some ideas for programmers...

First off this issue we have some suggestions from Carl Hafner in the USA who writes: "I use a utility on my iMac called CopyPaste which, among other things allows you to keep and use 100 clipboards. This has saved me a-lot-of-work when submitting my website URL to the various search engines. I don't recall ever having seen anything like this for the Atari."

I am aware that Katherine Ellis programmed for the Atari a Clipboard utility which gave you some control over Clipboards and perhaps this is worth checking out first?



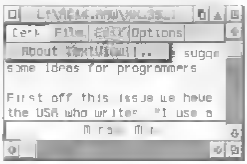
▲ Katherine Ellis's Clipboard+ utility

However if anyone wants to develop the idea further Carl has helpfully provided a web site address to check out, Script Software
http //www scriptsoftware com/

Carl has also thought the idea of the Atari having a dedicated web site devoted to giving out information on latest versions of software would be useful. The Mac has something like this at.
http //www versiontracker com/

Well there are already a number of Atari sites that provide a similar service but there is perhaps scope for someone to set up a very comprehensive site?

On to programming suggestions now. Like many people I tend to collect a lot of bits of information from all over the net and through emails etc. There s no problem saving the files to disk in different folders depending on their content but often these individual files would be better merged into one file for easy editing printing and viewing. For example you have a series of emails about the same subject and would like to merge them into one file. The obvious solution is to use a text editor and merge one file after another but perhaps a better solution is to have some sort of utility that would automatically append one file onto another preferably using the Drag and drop protocol. Options to append files in order depending on file date size and so on would be nice.



Staying with text file manipulation I m rather taken with the idea of a multiple text file viewer. Viewing programs such as ST Guide and Textview are excellent but they restrict you to loading one file at a time. Textview is better in that you can open files into separate windows so you can view a number of files but it would be very useful to be able to select a whole bunch of files from a file selector such as Freedom and load them into a viewer at one go. You could have a keyboard or mouse controlled way of switching between files to be viewed and various options to copy and paste etc. The Revenge Document Displayer is perhaps a model for this sort of utility but wrapped up in a more modern GEM look. It would also be nice if such a viewer could handle a variety of text formats apart from the usual TXT and ASC ones. Something capable of reading Papyrus or RTF documents and stripping out everything apart from the text would be very welcome.

Millennium Mayhem

Following on from John Firth s problems with SYSTEM3 in AC#12 I've received this response from Roger Burrows.

In your February column John Firth reported his problems with the SYSTEM3 invoicing program (the February issue was my first look at your excellent magazine).

The fact that dates after 1999 revert to the date the program was written (rather than 1900 for example) helps demonstrate why there is no simple and universal fix to the Y2K bug". Faced with the decision on how to handle dates after 1999 programmers can choose to do whatever they like. If it s just the printed date that s wrong then it might be possible to fix this by intercepting the print output and changing 1989 to 2000 (assuming no one orders a quantity of 1989 or has a customer number of 1989). If the date is always in exactly the same format (for example 31 July 1995) then the printer intercept can look for this and only change 1989 (to 2000 2001) when preceded by the expected string format which should increase the safety of this approach.

If the date used internally is also wrong then it s a bigger problem because the calculation of stock on hand interest payments and so on is likely to be wrong. This could be worked around albeit with a considerable level of inconvenience as follows:

- *Set the system clock back 8 years (8 instead of 10 years so leap years are handled correctly) to 1991 with the correct month/day*
- *Start a completely new stock control file to avoid the above-mentioned problems with internal date calculations*
- *Install a printer intercept program that will change 1991 1999 to 1999 2007 as described above*
- *Prepare to repeat this in 2007!*

Except the day of the week will be wrong oh well back to the drawing board!

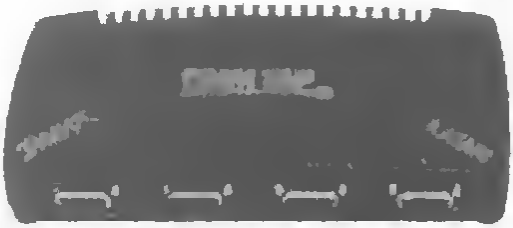
Roger Burrows, Anodyne Software

You've got a bright idea for a program, but you don't know your C from your Basic?

Well, we have tame programmers wanting these very ideas, so send them in and we'll let the compilers loose!.

Teaming With Ideas

Xav finally puts the Team Tap to bed - and there's news all Jaguar owners should read...



Following last issue s oversized article I'm hoping a few of you have built your own Team Tap clones, or are about to It's also worth remembering that there are still official Team Taps available from Jaguar stockists such as The Console Centre and 16/32 - but you ll also get a copy of White Men Can't Jump, whether you like it or not (and most people don't)

Even if you don t own a Team Tap of your own it s so simple to adapt existing code to use them that I would urge any programmer to include the necessary support even if the game only needs one or two joypads At least then the user won t be forced to needlessly swap cables around It s slightly more work but with careful design it s possible to create reusable code which can be included in every subsequent program

So down to the nitty gritty Well actually it s already been covered in AC#5 and the relevant code s included on the Reader Disk/renegade CD ROM This issue dealt with reading joypads and the only major change needed is an updated MASKS H file containing the individual bitmasks for each of the eight potential Team Tap sockets which is included on this issue s Reader Disk/renegade CD ROM The other files from AC#5 were just simple examples and it s trivial to extrapolate from these into a full set of Team Tap functions

A little detective work

One of the b ggest problems with the Team Tap is actually knowing whether it s there or not! I ve mentioned this before but it s worth reiterating Because the Team Tap was designed to be transparent to the programmer it s actually quite difficult to tell whether or not your program should activate the extra Team Tap features The best advice I can offer here is to rely on timing tricks

First you need to display a title screen and request that a player presses a button on the first joypad (for example Press B on the first joypad to continue") This will involve sending a mask with bit 1 cleared (fire button B is in group 3) for port A. As soon as you register the keypress for button B test for another combination that has bit 1 cleared

For example, you could write a mask of 0xFFF8 which has bits 0 1 and 2 cleared If there is just a normal joypad attached this will be decoded as an OR function The result is that you should still be registering button B as being pressed since it will register if button A OR B OR C is pressed

If you do not register button B as still being pressed then either they let go of it very quickly or they have a Team Tap in which case the mask will have been decoded to check another joypad It is possible that the other joypad will also have B depressed but if your code works rapidly enough you should be able to check several combinations of masks with bit 1 cleared before the B button is released Try checking them in reverse order as the higher sockets are less likely to be in use This procedure will unfortunately have to be repeated for both ports if your program allows a Team Tap in either Of course you could always just ask the user whether or not they have a Team Tap fitted and hope they don t lie but where s the fun in that?

Any port.

Perhaps the most intriguing question of all is where exactly to plug the Team Tap in? Suppose you are writing a game which requires four players the most obvious solution is to have a Team Tap in port A with each player plugged into it. But suppose the user decides to play an older game that isn t Team Tap aware For two player mode it expects one joypad in port A no problem there the Team Tap is transparent but it also expects one in port B The user therefore has to unplug one of the joypads and plug it into port B

The solution to this problem as used in White Men Can t Jump is to put the Team Tap into port B The first player uses a single joypad in port A, the second uses the first one in the Team Tap and so on Should they decide to play an old game player 2 can still use the joypad in the Team Tap without any unplugging

In a storm?

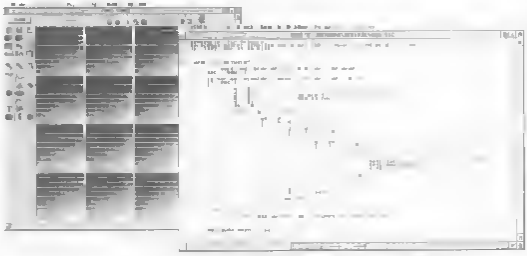
In the next issue we ll begin looking at the one EJP device all Jaguar owners have been waiting for - a Tempest 2000 compatible rotary controller Once again this is a modification of normal joypad technology so even if you aren t interested in the Team Tap digging out that copy of AC#5 will serve you well

Inside GEM

Mark Wherry puts GEMScript and OLGA theory into practice...

On other platforms the Microsoft Office suite of programs is popular because the component applications work together to provide an integrated solution OLGA and GEMScript makes it possible for stand-alone Atari applications to work together

All you need is a multi-tasking environment (Magic MiNT Geneva N AES etc) so more than one application can be running at the same time along with a copy of OLGA A GEMScript Interpreter such as Scripter or Simple Script is also desirable



A tiny snippet of code can create all the colour I only you could see them

ArtWorx and Texel

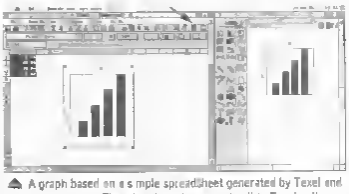
With Texel v2 x and ArtWorx v1 6 and above it s possible to add graphs within your spreadsheet. To do this check these three entries exist in your OLGA.INF file

```
[Extensions]
 TAD=$ARTWORX
 CWG=$ARTWORX

[Applications]
ARTWORX=ARTWORX=D:\ARTWORX\ARTWORX.APP
```

Edit the Artworx path entry so it points to the location of your copy of Artworx and that s all there is to it now for some fun!

Load Texel with an existing spreadsheet select a range of values then click the graph button towards the right of the top toolbar Texel now launches ArtWorx and creates the graph in ArtWorx by sending commands via the GEMScript protocol ArtWorx then draws that graph within the Texel spreadsheet by using the OLGA Inplace drawing features neat eh?



A graph based on a s mple spreadsheet generated by Texel and drawn by ArtWorx This object can be resized within Texel with no loss of quality because ArtWorx creates vector graphics

To customise the graph simply double-click on it to open the file within ArtWorx and edit it as desired On saving the file any changes are automatically updated within Texel Although Microsoft s Excel spreadsheet can create graphs independently the ability to edit graphs within ArtWorx gives you total control over the finished result

ArtWorx and Scripter

Texel utilises the drawing power of ArtWorx by controlling c us ng the GEMScript protocol As we have ex plained in previous columns it s possible to create your own commands and using a GEMScript interpreter send them to GEMScript aware applications

ArtWorx includes some example scripts which can be used with Scripter the commercial GEMScript interpreter which is based on a C like syntax Scripter has recently been translated into English by Peter West (TransAction) and hopefully an English release will be made available shortly Using this combination ArtWorx can be used to plot scientific graphs create mathematical images or anything else you can dream up

ArtWorx and CAB

Since CAB v2 0 the HTML `<embed>` tag has been supported and can be used to embed objects within web pages Objects can include movies and pictures and on other platforms it s possible to embed interactive movies such as Shockwave files For example entering

```
<embed
 src="tiger.cwg"
 width=400 height 400>
```

would draw my favourite tiger file at a width and height of 400 p xels When CAB interprets this tag it asks the OLGA manager what program handles CWG files in this case ArtWorx because OLGA.INF includes the CWG=ARTWORX entry ArtWorx draws the tiger within the CAB browser window using OLGA s inplace drawing abilities

An HTML file created in Everest and displayed in CAB ArtWorx draws the tiger within the CAB browser using the OLGA protocol

Conclusion

Hopefully these examples have given you an idea of the power GEMScript and OLGA bring to the Atari platform If enough programmers add support for these features the possibilities are endless Finally if you have any comments or questions please do get in touch with me at ***mark@ataricomputing com***
http //www rvmp co uk

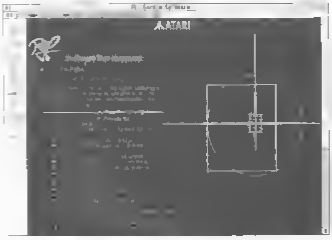
Contacts

Texel ArtWorx and Scripter
UK distributor System Solutions
Tel +44 (0)181 693 3355
Fax +44 (0)181 693 6936
info software@system solutions co uk
www system solutions co uk/cafe
Please note English versions of ArtWorx and Scripter are not currently available German demo versions can be downloaded from http //ash sww net

SITE SEEING

Richard Gordon Faika Software 83%

http://www.atari-computer.de/rgfaika/



Richard s pages are entirely hand coded HTML and devoted entirely to Atari content (a man after my own heart) These pages are a showcase for all of RGF's software developed using GFA BASIC which include

- Luna text editor (reviewed p43)
- Spica LED Panel clone
- Arthur98 German<>English dictionary excellent
- C60 Alternative GFA Compiler user interface
- Elly MOD Player
- Psych Graphic/sound demo
- Schon-Me Screen saver with plenty of loadable modules
- Rookie Simple boot selector
- SAMxPlay D2D sample player still in beta

The pages are sensibly organised with an individual page for each software title which provides general information screenshots and so on All the software is available for download from a separate download page which makes it easy to re-visit the website to check for updated versions

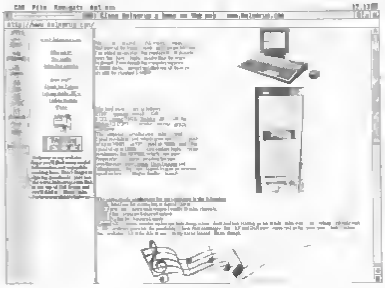
There are no graphical navigation aids and apart from the screenshots you might as well browse the pages in text only mode. There s a links page to other Atari sites and a guestbook to send Richard some feedback

I found the black background blue links and orange text a little hard on the eyes but these are easily turned off v a the CAB Use document settings opt on so you can suit yourself

Joe Connor

Claes Holmerup 79%

http://www.holmerup.com



If you re interested in music v sit these pages! Claes Holmerup along with other Swedish Atarians have formed a virtual record company which any musician can join to publish and sell their music on the web

For Atarians the site offers an up to date Atari news page and anyone using a Falcon for audio or Cubase will almost certainly want to add this site to their hotlist

There s detailed advice for anyone thinking of buying a Falcon to use for digital recording along with a list of hard drives and their suitability for AV use

If you re experiencing audio problems there s a troubleshooting page covering all the likely symptoms solutions and modifications Claes has been using and repairing Falcons for years and is happy to answer enquiries by email personally

The site is functional rather than visually attractive but the structure is easy to navigate The site makes use of frames and CGI scripts (which defeated CAB) but everything else works fine

Joe Connor

SITE NEWS

Atari IDE Interface DIY
There s a scheme for an IDE interface and brief description at
http //members fripod com/~pifers/atari/aside htm

English HYP files
Nick Ripley s has recently updated his webpages which included Texel Papyrus and other English HYP files along with his unusual system history future enhancements benchmarks and so on
http //www ripmail demon co uk/ATARI HTM
Email nick@ripmail demon co uk
Thanks to Carl Turner and a copy of GEMTrade there s now also an English HYP file for CD Player This can be downloaded from Alexander Clauss webpages at.
http //www tu darmstadt de/~aclauss/
Email cturner@zetnet co uk

Mountaineering
Last issue we gave the wrong URL for Mountain The correct URL is
http //perso club internet fr/vanel

Migratory HomePage Penguin
Matth as Jaap s webpages and email address have recently changed The webpages feature

- HomePage Penguin Atari/C64/Win95
- History of Home Computers

Email mjaap@atari computer de
http //www atari computer de/mjaap/

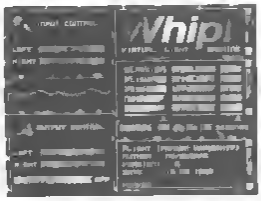
ICQ for STiK/STiNG available
Dan Ackerman has ported mICQ from Linux and it s a fully working TOS program Dan has included the source code so someone else can develop a GEM version Download a copy from
http //www netset com/~baldrick/

MagiC Online
These pages maintained by Bengy Collins comprise one of the best and most active Atari sites around Reasons to re-visit include

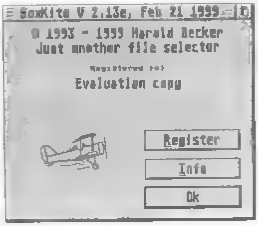
- An interview with EVL of the dead hackers society who explains to us all why he dislikes MagiC
- Brief interview with DEUN of Sectorone who has nearly completed his Falcon MP3 player you can also download his 256 colour desktop background picture of an attractive lady oe er missus!
- English RSC files for ASH emailer 2 and IConnect 1 7
- The latest MagiC software with over 89 locally stored archives

http //bengy atari org
Email collins@bulli com

Around half our subscribers take the Reader Disk The combination of tutorial files listings, PD/Shareware and exclusive software is unbeatable and not available anywhere else Individual back-issue copies of the Reader Disks are still available Please refer to page 9 for ordering details



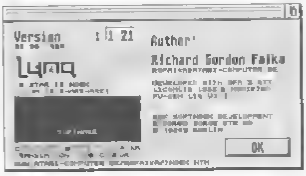
Whip! v0 3
Falcon only,
No (Norman Fenske)/Escape
Whip! is a Virtual Light Machine for Falcon owners which analyses music and creates visual screen effects To use Whip! connect a CD player or another audio source to the microphone connector of your machine



Boxkite v2 13e
All Ataris, Shareware
Harold Becker
BoxKite is a compact replacement file selector which incorporates features users of modern operating systems and applications have come to expect. BoxKite is multitasking friendly supports filenames up to 255 characters in length BubbleGEM and font selector support

Enhanced Joypad tutorial
EXCLUSIVE
© Xav/Atari Computing 1999
Replacement MASKS H file containing the individual bitmasks for each of the eight potential Team Tap sockets

HiSoft BASIC tutorial
EXCLUSIVE
© Paul Jones/Atari Computing 1999
PDO source code to accompany the HiSoft BASIC tutorial



Luna v1 21e
All Ataris, Shareware
Richard Gordon Falka
Luna is an ASCII editor which boasts many impressive block handling features not available in other Atari text editors Includes Drag and Drop OLGA and AV protocol support

hEARcoach v0 963
All Ataris, Shareware
Joakim Högberg
For musicians aural tests are a necessary evil hEARCoach offers both an interval and a chord trainer from the comfort of a modern GEM application These trainers allow you to hear each question as many times as required and will reveal the answer if you get stuck Remember practice makes perfect!

Don't forget that all previous Reader Disks are still available!

See page 9 for more details

CD-ROM Subscribers!

Although there has still been no official confirmation concerning the future of the STraTOS magazine we have now decided to close our STraTOS CD ROM subscription offer If future issues of STraTOS do appear we can make them available as separate Reader Offers This means existing CD ROM subscribers have a choice to make from the options below

Please indicate your preference then complete sign and return the form and we'll do the rest

☐ Please send me a copy of the **renegade** CD now and refund or invoice me for the difference
I agree to pay any outstanding balance on receipt of invoice

☐ Please send me the AC14 Reader Disk now and send me Reader Disks instead of CDs from now on

☐ Please send me a refund
I do not wish to receive either Reader Disks or the **renegade** CD

Please send completed form to

renegade CD Offer
Atari Computing
73 Bentinck Drive
TROON
Ayrshire
KA10 6HZ
SCOTLAND

SIGNATURE

NAME

ADDRESS

POSTCODE

Shareware and PD

NEWS

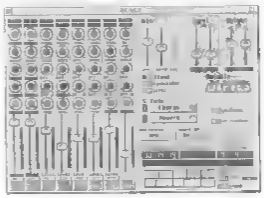
InterActive closed on May 30th 1999 Joe Connor said

Although InterActive was never run as a profit making venture sadly registrations no longer cover running costs I'd like to thank everyone who has registered software through InterActive which has put thousands of pounds into the pockets of Atari software authors from which we have all benefited

Download links direct to former InterActive supported authors home pages will be maintained in preference to maintaining a central ftp site which should help ensure the pages remain up to date

Joe intends to continue to translate German software into English and many of the former InterActive webpages will remain online as part of the TransAction crew homepages (of which Joe is a founder member) For more details http //www cix co uk/~inactive/

QUINCY v3



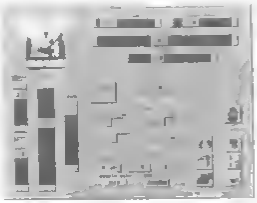
This formerly commercial Falcon 8 track digital audio recorder programmed by Gilles Barges has recently been released as shareware Here's a feature list

- 8 track automated mix table + Each track has level pan 2 effect send bass treble mute solo controls Two effects can be used simultaneously or bass/treble + 12dB equaliser + 3 programmable effects modules chorus reverb and delay with vumeters to adjust recording level + Total Remix from 8 tracks down to 1 or 2 tracks + All controls fully automated
- Tape navigation + Play loops with one sample accuracy + Punch in/Punch out recording + Non destructive recording + Fast forward/rewind while playing + Display by time SMPTE or bar beats + Immediate positioning with a click + Positioning Quantize related to MIDI functions
- MIDI Managing + MIDI file import (type 0 and 1) + Synchronous playback of audio and MIDI files including loops + Can mute MIDI file tracks change tempo generate MIDI metronome + Generate MIDI clocks to synchronise an external sequencer
- Sample Editor + Six kinds of plotting including envelope decimation and cloud + Zoom down to sample accuracy + Copy/Paste/Import/Export with AVR, AIFF AIFF-C formats + Analyse level correction fade in and fade out functions
- Inputs/Outputs + Records one or two tracks from analog input + Records up to 8 tracks simultaneously from a digital input (DSP port) + Plays 2 tracks post mix or 8 tracks pre-mix to digital output.
- English and French interface and documentation

QUINCY can be configured to only use system calls to access the DSP and/or DMA sound system which makes it possible for TOS compatible platforms which offer DSP and DMA support to support QUINCY

QUINCY can be downloaded and evaluated for up to 30 days registration for an unrestricted version costs 200 FF (around £21) For more details contact Gilles Barges
Email gbarges@pacwan fr
http //perso pacwan fr/gbarges

Videlity v1 03 now Freeware



To celebrate his employment as an official Gameboy developer Dave Murphy has recently released Videlity the Falcon screen enhancer as freeware

Videlity offers software resolution enhancement for all Falcon owners along with support for the Blowup and Screenblaster hardware resolution expanders Videlity used together with Black Scorpion Software's Nemesis accelerator allows access to the quarter pixel VGA TrueColor settings

Also included on Dave's webpages are the latest library files for Videlity which contain a selection of screen settings suitable for most monitor types

Dave has also updated his Falcon Sample Player PLAY_SAM so it no longer resets the volume on startup and he has removed the printing of error messages so it can be used as a plug-in with CAB VA_START support has also been added which means you don't have to stop playback or wait for one sample to finish before starting a new sample - this only works under multitasking operating systems with a suitable AV Server installed
Email dave@atari org
http //www users zetnet co uk/dmurphy/

Aniplayer v2 06

Since v2 03 Aniplayer the popular AVI/MOV media player programmed by Didier Mequignon in France has changed status from Freeware to Shareware and now includes a shareware delay/reminder screen when launched

Aniplayer offers RSC files and documentation in French English German Swedish and Dutch This release offers the following new features (since v2 05)

- Sound configuration dialog + Direct to disk > Preload sound
- Display configuration dialog + Delay slide show picture 0 to 99 seconds (JPEG) + Don't use GEM + 256 colour dithering
- With/without GEM option during movie playback
- Special 160x240 screen display on Falcon (normally 320x240)
- Improved MilanBlaster support (CD frequency)
- MPEG2 bugfixes and much more

UK registrations via CyberSTrider cost £10
http //www cyberstrider net
Didier Mequignon
Email didier mequignon@wanadoo fr
http //aniplay atari org

SUPPORT SHAREWARE AUTHORS!

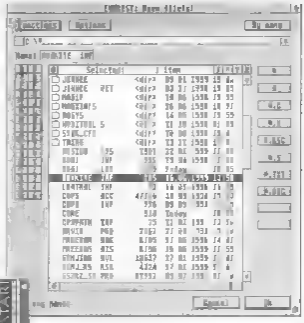
Boxkite v2.13 — 86%

Utility Shareware, all Ataris
Email hbeckerh@atari-computer.de

BoxKite is a replacement file selector programmed by Harold Becker. Although BoxKite has been under development for many years has never attracted much attention from English speaking users partly because alternatives such as Selectric and Freedom have been actively promoted by InterActive and CyberSTrider. With Selectric and Freedom no longer under development Harold has taken the opportunity to release a new version which supports all the features users of modern operating systems and applications expect including

- File selector and dialogs in GEM windows
- Long filename support up to 255 characters
- BubbleGEM support
- Font selector support
- Multiple file selection
- Automatic path history popup
- Auto filename completion
- Re-sizeable file selection window
- Colour display of folders and programs
- Integral file search
- Integral file copy/move and delete operations
- Sort by name, type, size, date and unsorted
- File creation, touching and info
- Symbolic files displayed in italics
- Keyboard operation
- Popup menus
- Scrollable edit fields
- Wildcards and masks
- User-definable file masks

Installation is easy: copy BOXKITE.PRG to your Auto folder and reboot. There are a few optional extras including an accessory/application and CPX to call BoxKite on demand, a BubbleGEM help file, some programming examples and a utility to convert existing configuration files.



BoxKite is multitasking friendly which allows background applications to continue running while the file selector is displayed, several concurrent applications can even open file selector boxes at the same time.

Loadable file systems under MagiC/MiNT and filenames with mixed case and/or special characters are all supported and BoxKite intelligently recognises applications which do not support long filenames, displaying only TOS 8.3 filenames for selection. Attempting to load a long filename into an application which doesn't support long filenames (by toggling the Long names option) displays a warning alert. The auto Path history popup keeps track of your most frequently accessed files paths, although it doesn't track filenames like the Freedom history popup and is limited to eight files. The interface is functional but feels drab and I'd like to see the options in the functions popup implemented as icons to liven things up a bit.

Registration costs just DM20 or 10 Euros (around £7.50) which removes the nag boxes and enables file moving/touching and the save configuration option.

Although BoxKite doesn't offer the same razzmatazz as Freedom, it's easier to install and still actively supported.

Joe Connor

hEARCoach v0.96 — 80%

Music/Utility Joakim Hogberg
Email gokmase@bigfoot.com
http://gokmase.atari.org

If there's one aspect of music education that all musicians hate, it's aural tests - and just like a trip to the dentist, they're inescapable! Despite common myth, most people can do well in aural exams even if they aren't fortunate enough to be blessed with a bionic ear - it's a simple matter of practise. A computer is the perfect tool for carrying out this practise as, it is capable of producing random tests, and won't laugh if you make a mistake, well not yet anyway. There have been many aural training packages for the Atari over the years including Sainberg's The Ear and C. Lab/Emagic's excellent Aura. All of which brings us neatly to hEARCoach.

hEARCoach is a simple but effective modern GEM application written using GFA Basic and currently consisting of an interval trainer and a chord trainer. Both trainers allow you to hear each question as many times as required and to see the answer if you get stuck. The interval trainer provides a statistics error report page so you can see where your weaknesses lie. It would be nice if the number of hearings and attempts per question could be added to the statistics page.

The program allows a fair amount of user configuration that can be saved for next time the program is run. An interval settings dialog allows you to set which intervals are used by the interval trainer. The global settings dialog allows the lowest/highest note to be specified, the length of notes played, whether the chords are arpeggiated or not, MIDI settings and more. hEARCoach can be used with external MIDI playback equipment or can generate basic tones using the Atari's sound system. I would personally recommend a realistic acoustic piano sound for serious practise. Although the hEARCoach is quite basic, it is still very useful and clearly shows potential if enough people support the author. hEARCoach is shareware, but at just $3 dollars to register offers excellent value for money. An ST Guide hypertext manual is supplied and I haven't experienced one crash while I've been testing it, is there a higher compliment?!

Mark Wherry

FireNews News Reader

Derryck Croker looks at this usenet client for STiK/STinG...

Our tour of FireNews starts with the utility program Babel - its task is to log on to the news server to collect and deliver articles after ya've dialed a connection with STinG or STiK. All aboard then!

Our first stop is to collect the list of newsgroups your ISP carries - since it's an ASCII file then a list downloaded by another program can be used instead (NEWSie for example). Babel blotted its copybook by simply stopping once it had downloaded the list with no sign that it had finished.

With that hurdle overcome - next stop is a visit to Babel's ACTIVE file to specify which newsgroups to subscribe to. I'd strongly recommend including the "headers-only" flag in any newsgroup newly subscribed to to avoid a potentially extremely large download - unlike NEWSie (reviewed in ACE#13) there's no way to limit the number of messages to download. As an alternative you may prefer to try Gary Priest's Newswatch utility (http://www.the-gap.demon.co.uk). If your news server supports the Newnews command then Newswatch will collect message headers from a specified time and date - it's then easy to plug the highest message number from each group into the ACTIVE file - or indeed NEWSie's DEFAULT.GRP file. Newswatch takes no further part in the proceedings.

Babel is a dual purpose utility - its other job is to maintain your off-line message bases. This includes actually deleting messages marked as "deleted". To make this a simple double-click task

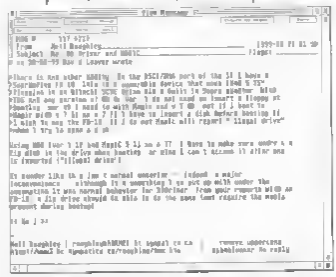
- From the desktop copy Babel to itself
- Rename the copy as MAINTAIN.PRG
- Install MAINTAIN.PRG as an application with the command line parameter -m

With some messages or headers downloaded Babel hands over to FireNew which is a standard GEM application. It runs happily on a variety of Atari systems (although topping it with the MagiC utility Applins calls forth what appears to be a harmless alert but with an incomprehensible error report!).

There's no mystery operating FireNews - with such a simple interface it's really self-explanatory with a double-click on a message header (downloaded as a result of using the "headers-only" flag) bringing an offer to download the message itself - or if the message is already on disk to display the message itself. There's a facility to set flags on a contiguous range of messages - for example to mark for download later or mark for deletion. Another black mark though - there's only one way of counting messages for multiple flag setting - and that's with a finger or pencil acting as a gauge - the tip of one's tongue sticking out is an optional extra!

A variety of configuration options need to be set to set various aspects of FireNews - which may be a result of its non-registered status - but I could only make some settings "take" by first saving the configuration file and then taking it for a visit to a text editor. No big deal - just another minor irritation.

Firenews's simplicity continues into its handling of replying to newsgroup postings in the form of personal email to the author - the message is copied to the temporary file that your email program uses for editing - and then your chosen editor is called. This is an elegant approach but there's no easy way to copy your reply to the newsgroup. Supported email clients are Antmail, NEWSie and Infitra, with Mymail on the cards for the future. Listed in the documentation (there's online help with an ST Guide hypertext) are some mouth watering ideas for further development of FireNews. It's a great pity development seems to have stalled at the moment because it shows great promise - but even as it stands it's perfectly usable despite one or two slightly rough edges. O



▲ Running Babel in maintenance mode enables message threading - clicking on the arrows next to the message numbers at the top of the window is your navigation guide

FIRENEWS

Author

Christian Andersson
Email: faltnon@bigfoot.com
faltnon@earthling.net
http://firestorm.atari.org

Pros

- Easy to use compact program
- Messages marked as "Deleted" are still accessible until maintenance
- StringServer and similar server support
- AVServer support
- Free registration by email

Cons

- Some menu options aren't implemented yet
- No response from author on requesting a key
- No built-in newsgroup search

60%

Luna

Is it a shooting star, heavenly body or terrestrial text editor? Joe Connor, our man who fell to earth, tracks its orbit...

Luna, programmed by Richard Gordon Falka, is an ASCII editor and before you start yawning at the back Luna offers features not offered by Everest, qed or any other Atari text editor. Impressive when you consider Luna has only been under development for a few months!

When I started this review I wasn't convinced the Atari platform needed another text editor - especially not one programmed using GFA BASIC. However I have had to change my mind to make room for Luna which is an excellent example of what can be achieved using modern Atari BASIC languages and development tools.

Luna does everything you'd expect an ASCII text editor to do. It's ideal for editing configuration files, writing source files or for use as an email client. Aside from its great looks it's the clever stuff only Luna can do which makes it stand out against the competition.

Clever stuff

Luna's block handling features are unsurpassed offering three different block selection modes which can even be mixed and matched as desired.

- Column blocks. Ideal for working with tables and lists. Columns can be cut and pasted as columns - even over existing text.
- Group blocks. Global cut, copy and paste operations can be performed on multiple selected blocks of text including Column blocks. Each individual block can also be separately processed as an Object block if the Object blocks option is ticked in the Options menu.
- Object blocks. In addition to the commonplace cut, copy, paste operations object blocks can also be filtered using a selection of Modules. Luna includes modules to convert blocks to all capitals or all lower case letters or capitalise the first letter of every word. Programmers can add their own modules using the plug in interface provided. Furthermore mathematical operations can be performed on object blocks. This means columns of numbers can be added up, the average calculated, and much more.

A marked block can be Drag and Dropped onto other Drag and Drop aware applications and vice versa. For example mark a block in a Luna window and drag it onto the jinnee desktop background and it transforms into a desktop notelet.

Proportional and monospaced fonts are supported and text scrolling and block marking operations, although not as fast as Everest, are smooth and perfectly usable.

Although we've all got used to working with black text on a white background it's a combination known to be tiring on the eyes. On colour systems the text and background colours can be selected from the sixteen standard system colours which is great but it would be even nicer to be able to select any colour from the available system palette.

Luna supports qed/Everest/Edith style Kurzel files and includes its own script function which can be used to automate tasks. It makes sense to offer compatible Kurzel files but it seems to me GEMScript support would have been more useful than another proprietary script format.

A German ST-Guide format hypertext is included but currently there's no English documentation. However RSC files for various languages are available including English, so it's easy enough to get up and running.

Luna does occupy more memory than either Everest and qed but if you're making use of features only available in Luna that won't be a concern. I did experience a few minor problems which is hardly surprising given the rapid pace of Luna development - no doubt these bugs will have been squashed by the time you're reading this.

There's currently no word wrap feature (which as an Everest user I find indispensable) but Richard intends to implement this in a future release depending on registration levels. The unregistered version's fully functional but restricted to displaying a single document so if you find Luna useful and you'd like Luna development to continue - do register your copy. O

LUNA v1.2

Author
Richard Gordon Falka

Status
Shareware - registration costs DM20 (around £7.50)

Requires
Any Atari system

Contact
Email: rgfa@atari-computer.de
http://www.atari-computer.de/rgfa/
RGF-software, Richard-Sorge-Str. 24, 10249 Berlin, Germany

90%

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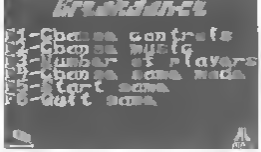
Breakdance

Shiuming Lai has a few rounds on Paranoia's contribution to the dance 'em up(?) genre...



There is a zany little game on the PlayStation which I'll avoid mentioning because I can't spell the name. It features a groovy cartoon dog and you have to make him rap and do dance moves (you know the one), all in wibbly Wobblevision. Quite hilarious and entertaining to play.

I don't recall many such games on any system but the concept has been tried many years ago in the 8 bit micro era and this is where Breakdance unashamedly draws its inspiration. Actually based on a game by Epyx, where you have to remember and follow the computer's series of moves in ever increasing complexity, now we can enjoy this simple but fun game on our STs and Falcons.

The Paranoid has worked his STOS coding magic to bring the game up to date with swish graphics and strutting tracker music courtesy of MC Laser of tSCc. Up to six players can take control of the demo/game scene members on screen including The Paranoid Meister himself, all represented by neat caricatures.

Llama, excellent tSCc coder from Germany

Sage, coder and hacker from Escape

Grey, the most famous person of the polish Atari scene!

A certain Miss Atari performs the dance moves to which each player must follow

It starts off easy and before long you begin to question what damage all those late nights out must have done to your memory. It gets really fun when you have some friends to play with, as you often lose track of who's playing what, while laughing at the bungling antics of the current player, until you realise you are the current player!

In contrast to the carefully-drawn detail of the graphics, their animation is as ropey as a learner driver who hasn't mastered clutch control. Ironically this adds to the amusement factor, but also makes moves quite clear to remember. After all, this is meant to be a game design first and gas whiz second.

There's a definite arcade feel to it as individual player's scores are blipped on screen, giving an incentive to thrash your opponents amid the anarchy of losing a round by some silly mistake. The tension mounts especially in competitive mode where the players are called randomly and have to extend the dance sequence with one extra move. In normal mode, points are awarded to the player completing the moves fastest.

Minor complaints

While giving a polished shine, the fancy transitional graphic wipe patterns cannot be bypassed. Seeing them a few times is enough, after which you just want to dance! It's far too easy to lose a round due to the strict zero tolerance of mistakes, which can be frustrating. Also flicking my Falcon's CENTurbo II into screaming- demon mode shows where some of the code loops are not based on real time, making an excellent demonstration of its power but the game impossible to play. All game programmers should begin to take this seriously as acceleration becomes more popular.

I can see great potential for expansion of this game concept - how about developing it into a generic modular dance sequencer with add-on style packs? Yeah, let's have a funkadelic 70s disco plug-in. Aham. Never mind. Anyway, download this and invite some mates over. It's free and it's a jolly good laugh. O

BREAKDANCE

Author
Paranoia

Contact
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http://paranoia.atari.org

Requires
ST(e) or Falcon, 320x200 screen mode (ST low), 1Mb memory. Friends recommended

Pros
Lasting simple fun, visually attractive, nice music, a good ambassador of the STOS language

Cons
No head-spin! Lack of sound effects, slightly cumbersome menu system

Scores
75% Sound
70% Graphics
79% Gameplay
75% Overall

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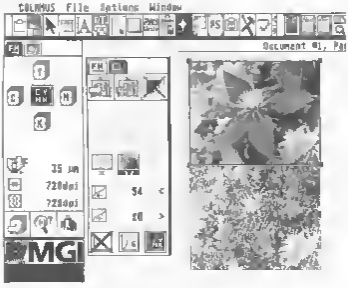
Calamus Secrets

Dave Barkin insists Calamus SL/98 is the most powerful Desktop Publishing program available for any computer and has decided to reveal some of the hidden secrets he's discovered...

Calamus SL has enormous power Aside from many of the built in functions Calamus is designed to be "modular", meaning that aside from the basic program many functions come as modules Once loaded a module behaves as an integral part of the program In other words, the new functions contained in the module are accessed in the same way as the basic functions The whole process is transparent to the user

While many modules are standard with the program there are at least 40 optional ones which do everything from allowing the Import of Postscript and Encapsulated Postscript to calibrating your monitor This article will explore one of the more esoteric modules the Star Screening Module



The Star Screening Light Module and by adding a screenshot the other user definable settings

Star Screening is a brand name for what is technically known as FM modulation or Stochastic Screening FM modulation is a way of converting a greyscale or colour image (8 or 24 bit) into dots for printing Well, you might say isn t all printing done via dots? Does Barkin not know that with the exception of dye sublimation printers all printing is done via dots? Yes yes I know about this phenomenon But conventional screening involves the creation of printer points These printer points consist of groups" of dots laid out in a grid (screen)

Since most home printers have a limited ability to lay down dots they are further limited when they must group these dots into printer points Even the 1440x720 dpi Epson s not normally capable of printing out camera ready copy for the purpose of getting professional results Indeed these printers come with drivers that dither" the image for better results of home output Dithering consists of the software simply converting the areas of colour into individual dots of CYMK (or black for greyscale images) bypassing the conventional grid of a screened image This process is one that I refer to as poor mans stochastic screening Calamus along with quite a few other programs on all computer platforms have this capability

True Stochastic Screening goes one step further The software not only dithers the image but it "looks" at each area of colour and makes intelligent (user definable) decisions as to how to make the CYMK dots Decisions made for one area are then considered for the next area of colour This results in much higher contrast and definition than either conventional screening or standard dithering So on my Epson I get better results at 720 dpi than Photoshop which prints at 1440x720 dpi The Calamus implementation of this is of a very high quality There are two versions of the Star Screening Module The Light version limited to 750 dpi and the Pro version which has no limitations The Pro version can additionally convert the new star screened image into a conventional TIFF file and allows exporting the resulting files One other problem with both versions of the module is that they are memory intensive Both versions of the module can only process small images unless you have lots of memory In this sense there is no difference between the Light and Pro modules So apart from this limitation of the process the Light version is a usable demo of the Pro version - or is it?

Well I and others have found that everything the Pro version does can also be accomplished using the Light version Not only that but there are ways of overcoming the memory limitations Thus for the price of 50 Euro dollars you can have a program which does what on the Mac platform would cost a minimum of 600 dollars with a similar price on the IBM platform How is this done?

After an image is Star Screened you can simply tell Calamus to group the frame You can now use the optional Bridge module to either export the image or convert it into a CYMK frame (a star screened image is no longer 24 bit it is a 32 bit file) You could also use the user definable tiling frame and Bridge to export the new frame as a 32-bit CYMK image The Light version of Star Screening allows higher then 750 dpi screening - you simply can t print the results But once converted to a TIFF file you can do whatever you want with the image

Shortage of memory can be overcome using the program Outside This superb utility allows you to turn your hard drive into usable virtual memory You must tell Outside to use Calamus AND additionally specify the Star Screening module itself There s a lot more to getting good results from the Star Screening module but the above will allow you to make full use of the modules potential at unlimited sizes Until next issue

The before and after result of Star Screening a flower The resulting image is a fixed format" which means it must be printed at the exact size it was star screened Due to the nature of Atari Computing a printing process I doubt these images will print correctly

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As promised last issue here's the Error in Line Easter Coding Convention report. We bring you the lowdown on all the releases, big demos, little demos, great demos strange demos, and more!

Chris Holland for the Maggie Team

Error in Line Report

This special report is devoted to the releases from that party. There were a good many of them, with some of the greatest demos ever produced on any Atari computer! This is no exaggeration but a view consistent with over ten years of critical demo appreciation. From seeing the likes of the Union demo back in '89, to the present time.

Error in Line (EIL) was dominated by not so humble ST. The deserved first prize winner was Checkpoints effort Suretrip, which took the ST to new heights of technical excellence, a tour-de-force of brainblasting effects which would not look out of place among the High Spec Power PC based Amiga demos showing on the big screen before the competition! Many effects genuinely breached the boundaries of the previously possible, and it is great to see that even after a decade or more, the ST can still surprise!

A little way behind, were two rather smooth and good looking ST entries from the Dead Hackers Society and the Polish group Mystic Bytes. Both of these featured modern demo design and flawless effects by both the crews. In places they looked indistinguishable from many Falcon productions. Swirly tunnel effects and bump-mapping predominated with both of these demos.

There was another high quality entry titled Rumpelkammer, by the temporarily resurrected group The Naughty Bytes (TNB). This was a more determinedly old school effort in its presentation but with some nice up to date effects mixed in, and in common with all the other entries, a totally polished look to it. A stunning fractal mountain scape, Wolfenstein style textured dungeon, and a Mario Kart sequence spring to mind as the highlights here.

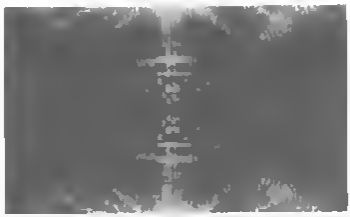
The Falcon demos shown in the competitions were good, but this time they were overshadowed by the ST releases. These suffered more noticeably from technical glitches and tended to look unfinished in the competitions, when shown on the big screen.

The winners were, perhaps inevitably, the Dead Hackers Society, but they were followed very closely by a great entry from FUN. A recount of the votes was demanded! FUN's demo was not shown up at its best on the big screen, and if it had been a little more been a little polished up, could well have won with its high quality screens, and manic effects switching.

A beautiful but slow entry from a relatively new Polish group Cobra came next, this one very much in the style of higher end Amiga or PC demos with lots of complex 3-D objects, but needing a speed injection, such as the Centurbo 2 board on offer as the first prize.

There was an entry from the self styled laziest crew NoCrew, the Ego demo, a slice of 1993 multimedia style as envisaged by Atari Corp back then. It was left lurking uneasily in the awkward ground between normal and fake demo categories.

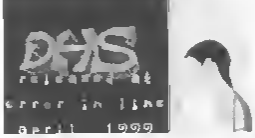
And of the fake demos? These cling on to any self respecting demo competition like fleas to an alley cat, but even these were of a higher standard than normal. The mysterious Poets of Bombay group looked at the whole Ibiza club scene through curry stained lenses in their Ibiza demo. Dutch group Nun were showing Vatican approved demo effects in time for the Easter weekend, and there was another entry from TNB gently taking the wee-wee from certain Nintendo Gameboy emulators.



The Reservoir Gods dominated the 128 byte tro, with three entries to this tiny but nice category.

There were also very good showings on both the pictures and music, with highlights by Agent T of Cream winning the TrueColor picture category, Havoc of FUN winning the ST 16 colour picture prize, and MSG of the Reservoir Gods winning the Protracker music competition with a last minute entry rescued from his dead folder and spruced up a bit for the competition!

With some interesting Wild com petition entries bringing up the rear, Error in Line was probably the best Atari coding party ever, in terms of release activity. Not that anyone forgot to have a great time there though! O



Q&A

"We always have more answers than questions"

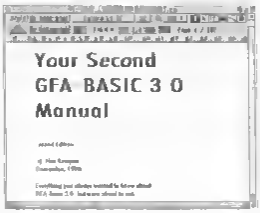
Q I'm interested in learning to program. I bought GFA Basic 3.0 and a few books but I can't find any advanced beginner books. I have one called training boot camp but I've nearly completed it and want to know more. I'm wondering if there's someone or something that can teach me from step 1 to advanced use of GFA code?

I'm also having problems with Pagestream 2.2so. I used to run it on my 4Mb STe and after loading it reported 87764 bytes of system memory was available which left no room to import large images. I thought my problem would be resolved when I bought a 14Mb Falcon but, to my surprise, I've found that Pagestream just took more space for itself and I couldn't even load a 2Mb graphic file! Can you help me!

Gene, by email

A There are three on disk guides worth looking at. The first two are on FaST Club disks PR.481 and. Your Second Manual, which is very comprehensive, is on disk PR.485

- GFA Expert 2
- GFA Tutorial
- Your Second GFA Basic Manual



As with all programming languages, you can learn a lot from looking at other peoples source code and playing around with it. There's loads of source code on FaST Club disks PR.483 and PR.484. GFA Basic 2, for which the FaST Club have a distribution licence, is available on FaST Club disk PR.492.

Loading Pagestream 2.2 on a 4MB STe leaves lots more than 87764 bytes available for creating pages, loading images, etc. If I remember correctly this System Memory figure refers to the memory that PageStream has left for the system to use, with the remainder having been grabbed by PageStream for creating documents.

I'm not surprised you can't load a 2Mb graphic file on your 4Mb system. Most graphic file formats (GIF, IMG, JPG, and so on) are compressed files and the actual image data will be significantly greater than the size of the file that you are loading from disk. A 2Mb JPEG file could easily need 20Mb memory or more when uncompressed.

Under multitasking you can simply load another program before launching Pagestream then quit that to free up the memory but this won't work under single TOS. However there are utilities which can limit the amount of memory that can be grabbed by an application.

On disk FaST Club disk UT.370 there's DC RESERVE which saves a pre-defined amount of memory when you execute a program which might just work.

Jeremy Hughes and Paul Glover,
FaST Club PO Box 101,
Nottingham, NG2 7NN, England
Email: stclub@cix.co.uk
http://www/cix.co.uk/~stclub/

Pagestream is known to grab all available memory when run but there are a few ways around the problem. Options include using a resizable accessory based RAMdisk which reserves memory, or limiting the amount of memory used by the application. the Thing desktop offers this ability.

Derryck Croker

There are dozens of third party development tools available to anyone developing with GFA Basic. These range from freeware add-ons such as GFA Flyd'als to commercial software such as Face Value. Although some of these tools are only available in German a webpage search should turn up plenty of sources.

Joe Connor

Similar printer problems

Q I run a laser and Citizen HQP 45 24 pin dot matrix from an Atari STFM 1040 with 4Mb memory. The Citizen has suddenly refused to print anything from my Atari although it works with my Acorn and PC. I run Protext v 5, Calamus vl 9 and Cubase Score V 2 on my Atari. The laser still works as does an inkjet I borrowed. any ideas?

Sydney Vale, East Sussex

I have an STe 4Mb, TOS 1.62, TUS IDE HD. At ACC '98 I purchased a Citizen Swift 24 printer to use with my STe but on connecting it to my system the output was complete gibberish. I reconnected my old printer (Panasonic KX P-1081) and the output from that was also near-gibberish. The Citizen works fine with my PC and the Panasonic works with my other STe. I have heard some printers can put a large load on the printer port. Could this be the case and am I safe to use it with my spare STe machine?

C Thorley, BFPO 25

A It might be worth trying another printer cable. There are at least eight 'earth return' pins in the centronics port and not all equipment connects all of them. If a wire is broken in the cable, it may be that the Citizen is not seeing an earth from the Atari whereas it is from the other computers. I have a similar problem in the reverse direction: one printer lead I use with my Atari (a simple ribbon cable) doesn't work with a PC, so there are obviously wiring differences.

Gary Bainbridge

I'm not sure about using the Citizen with STe machines but I am aware of people successfully using these printers with STFM machines.

Peter West

ST Applications Issue 2 published in January 1991 included an interface circuit that optically isolated the Atari serial port. I built one when I bought a 24 pin dot matrix printer which started to play up and it worked fine.

Keith Jackson

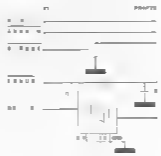


Figure
Schematic of the buffer circuit. IC1 contains 6 inputs of the hi-speed low transistor set, shown. IC2 is three grounded for data flow from S1 of printer, here 8 shown. 6 of the C1 are a mini high of parts not placed on a high resistance wire.

Paul Glover/FaST Club have kindly given us permission to include scans of the article on the renegade CD, thanks Paul!

MagiC 6

! Mono Magic 6 users, especially on an 8MHz machine, can speed up the boot by deleting the "tiles" and "image" lines from MAGX.INF. Alternatively you can replace the colour boot image and tiled background with mono equivalents which saves MagiC dithering them on the fly and delaying the arrival of the desktop.

```
# MAG MAGIX V6.00
#[boot]
logo=C:\BOOT.IMG
```

1 IMS 1 \GEMSYS\GEMDESK\PAT\LC FAT IMS image C \GEMSYS\GEMDESK\PAT\256\MAGIC IMG
And if you're wondering where the login banner from your Auto folder programs have disappeared to take a peek in the BOOT LOG file usually in the root directory of your boot partition (typically C) If you would prefer to see them at boot time simply delete the "log" line from MAGX INF

Matt Burten Derbyshire

Something for nothing

All scripts that are to be loaded into STinG for the purposes of accessing multiple ISPs require the line `DIAL SCRIPT` to be added to the bottom of the script STinG will reject it if this line is not present even if there are no arguments for it We didn t include this line in the DIAL SCR we included on the AC#13 Reader Disk so please edit your copy to include that entry at the end

Derryck Croker

Smart Works

Atari Works to Lotus SmartSuite conversion is straightforward and requires little or no cleaning up afterwards In fact it can be far more tricky transferring files between Lotus versions! There are three separate methods one each for the word processor database and spreadsheet I'm assuming floppy disk will be used to physically transfer the files between the PC and Atari machines

Word Processing: Atari Works to Lotus Word Pro conversion

Open Atari Works
- File - Open
- Select required file and OK
- Select (from File) Export File
- Choose Rich-Text Format (RTF) \
- Save as a RTF file (as already selected) in the file name and drive required usually to a floppy disk for the transfer to the other computer
- OK
- Close

Open Lotus Word Pro
- Go to File then Import/Export, click on Import
- Go to the drive holding the above RTF file and select the RTF file BY
- Look at Files of type selector and choose "Rich Text Format (RTF) and then open The file will then load into Word Pro
- Go to File and Save As click on Yes when the message appears asking if you wish to continue A SAVE AS Panel is displayed
- For (a) "Save as type" go to Lotus Word Pro 96 (* LWP) (b) the drive and/or directory to save in
- Click on Save
- Close the file

Database Atari Works to Lotus Approach database conversion

Open Atari Works
- Load Atari Works STD file
- Go to Export File
- Choose Database (DBF) format and OK
- Save the file changing the name if necessary in the required drive as a DBF file as shown to a floppy disk if this the method being used to transfer between the two computers
- Close the file

Open Lotus Approach database
- Go to File and Open
- Choose the above saved file
- Files of type should be dBASE IV (* DBF) and then Open
- Then Save As
- Select the required drive rename the file if required
- Choose Save as type Lotus Approach 9 (*.APR) then when "Save as type dBASE IV (* DBF) appears just OK to save Note that the file is saved twice once as an APR file and once as a DBF file
- Close the File

Spreadsheet: Atari Works to Lotus 123 spreadsheet conversion

Open Atari Works
- Load the required file into Atari Works spreadsheet
- TAB across the top row in each active column
- Go to Export File and select the required drive
- Select TAB-delimited ASCII text and click on OK Only rename if necessary
- Leave the file extender as TXT
- Click on OK and close the file saving to a floppy disk if this is the method being used to transfer the files to the other computer

Open Lotus 123 spreadsheet
- Change Files of type to All files (*)
- Select the above file The file will not have an extender
- Open Parsing Options
- At Start a new column at each Tab
- Go to Save As and use the required name (if to be changed) and drive "SAVE AS type should be Lotus 1 2 3 9 Workbook (it will probably default to this anyway)

Rod Jenkins, Australia, via email

Year 2000 testing

I have been doing some year 2000 testing on my most used Atari applications and I th nk I have discovered a problem with HiSoft BASIC v2 10 I've written a small program wh ch tests the HB DATE$ and TIME$ functions and displays the current system date and time then lets you set them to a new value The program then displays the new date and time When I run the program all goes well unt l you enter a year value of 2000 The program displays this as 20 0" Even f you set the system date and time using a CPX before running the program it displays 20 0 (thus proving the bug is 1 reading the date not setting it) Has anyone else come across this? It is definitely a HB problem rather than the system because both Papyrus 5 and the clock CPX set and display the date and time correctly If you do test your system don t forget to try out the following three dates which are critical because next year is also a leap year

- 28th Feb 2000 23 59 30 (and watch the date roll over)
- 29th Feb 2000 23 59 30 (and watch the date roll over)
- 1st March 2000

Guz via CIX atarcomputing conference

NEWSie Nicknames

I have been using NEWSie for some time and have spent hours/days trying to get Nicknames to work I have read the manual/updates thoroughly but when I create lists and select the name from Nicknames it only sends to the first name on the list and ignores the rest What am I doing wrong? I am using STinG and MagiC 5 on a Mega STe My NICKNAME TXT and paths both seem fine. I have HSMODEM HDDRIVER, WDAEMON and WDIALOG installed

Campbell Webster via email

Newer versions of WDIALOG are known to cause problems with NEWSie and Nicknames the author does mention it in the docs Basically just d tch WDIALOG and N cknames will work. You can always run WDIALOG from the desktop as and when you need it as I do

Mike Kerslake

Got an Atari-related problem?

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- HiSoft BASIC v2.1 (available from Cadenza Software)
- 1Mb memory

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Maggie, Issue 27

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Tel Chris 01735 637185 or email ckorycinski@zetnet.co.uk (14)

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WANTED

Wanted Band In A Box beyond V5 I have disks 1 2 3 and 4 but missed out on any more upgrades I know there are disks 5 6 and 7 out there somewhere but I've had no luck so far in finding them. Not even at the Stafford show Contact Chas Hanton 13 Pinewood Park, Addlestone Surrey KT15 3BS Telephone 01932 348051 (14)

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Wanted Atari Works. Telephone Mike Kersiake 0114 2966442. (14)

THE CONTACT FILES

If you need bit of help or advice or just want to swap Atari chit-chat with like-minded people there are now a number of methods of doing so Here a few pointers to various sources of help and chat

USENET (Newsgroups)

Based on the internet a huge and varied collection of chat areas with worldwide participation Atari users should check out the main comp sys atari st area which despite its name covers all the 68*** series of computers clones and emulators

WORLD WIDE WEB (WWW)

The following sites provide a very good source of information and links to other sites ATARI ORG Pathfinder an excellent place to locate almost anything of Atari interest Find it at http //www atari org/links/

Hallvard's Atari Launchpad another excellent place to start looking for links to sites of Atari interest It is at http //launchpad! atari org

FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions)

Nick Bates site is a must for Atari beginners or experienced users wanting to know more about their systems and what they can do with them Check out http //quicklag atari org

BULLETIN BOARD SYSTEMS

An enthusiast-run system which you join by simply dialing in and signing up All you need is a modem and terminal program and some form of offline reader The Atari BBS scene is not as active as it was a few years ago with only a few boards in most countries however it still has a role Some boards offer an indirect connection onto the internet so if don't have an internet account already they could be an option

CIX

A UK based commercial system with some similarities to the hobbyist Bulletin Board Systems (BBS) but with full internet access and full archiving of the message base as well as offering a wide range of secure conferencing facilities

LOCAL ATARI CLUBS

AC are aware of Atari computer clubs in the UK USA Canada Australia New Zealand Netherlands Belgium Germany France and Sweden We'll try and print some form of listing in the next issue but we'd appreciate hearing from readers with up to-date details of currently active clubs

Steinberg

PRO 24 III

PRO 24 III FUNCTIONS

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CONSTRUCTING A SONG

OTHER FUNCTIONS

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Blitting	119%
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